SECOND CONTEMPORARY VERSE ANTHOLOGY

1920–1923

SELECTED BY

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January 1987

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July 1928

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SELECTED FROM THE MAGAZINE
"CONTEMPORARY VERSE"
1920–1923

BY THE EDITOR
CHARLES WHARTON STORK

NEW YORK
E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY
681 FIFTH AVENUE

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This first edition is limited to 1500 copies.

Printed in the United States of America

To

To the Memory of Three Contributors

STEPHEN MOYLAN BIRD
JOSEPH ANDREW GALAHAD
JOYCE KILMER

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to thank the authors of all these poems for the permission to reprint them, and in addition the following publishers who have issued volumes in which certain pieces appeared previous to their inclusion in this anthology:

The Macmillan Co. for the poems of Sara Teasdale in her volume *Flame and Shadow,* for Marguerite Wilkinson's poem in *The Great Vision,* for Scudder Middleton's "The Girl" in *The New World,* for poems of Louise Driscoll, and for Du Bose Heyward's "Gamblers All" from *Carolina Chansons.*

George H. Doran Co. for Joyce Kilmer's "The Robe of Christ" from *Collected Poems,* for David Morton's sonnet from *Ships in Harbor,* and for poems by Amanda B. Hall and Robert J. Roe in volumes now in press.

Yale University Press for poems by Medora Addison, Karle Wilson Baker, Stephen Moylan Bird, Gamaliel Bradford, William Alexander Percy, Bernard Raymund, and Harold Vinal.

Houghton Mifflin Co. for selections by Abbie Farwell Brown, Elliott Lincoln, and Lilla Cabot Perry.

Dodd, Mead & Co. for poems by Hazel Hall and Amory Hare.

Henry Holt & Co. for the work of Stephen Vincent Benèt, Glenn Ward Dresbach, and Lew Sarett.

Charles Scribner's Sons for selections by Bernice Kenyon and John Hall Wheelock.

B. W. Huebsch for poems by Winifred Welles.

John Lane Co. for John Bunker's "The Flute Player."

Alfred A. Knopf for poems by Elizabeth Coatsworth.

The Midland Press for Leyland Huckfield's "The Land of Plums."

The Cornhill Publishing Co. and The Four Seas Co. for the work of Howard Mumford Jones and J. Corson Miller.

Will Ransome for a poem by Power Dalton.

The poems by Leonora Speyer, Willard Wattles and Clement Wood have already been published in volume form by E. P. Dutton & Co.

The editor asks indulgence for any errors or omissions.

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INTRODUCTION

THE pleasant labors of the Editor and his critical judgment, or lack of judgment, shall be expressed almost entirely through the poems to follow. For the present I hope to do little more than supply a taster, wishing the reader an open mind, or rather—what is perhaps the same—a zestful appetite.

CONTEMPORARY VERSE, as stated in the Introduction to the first anthology, attempts to give the public the best of what is sane and vital in American poetry today. It represents no clique, and the Editor does not publish his own verse. It has been called by one critic "a discreet protest against too much liberty." But *The New Republic,* pronouncing it "the best of our magazines of verse," attributes our success to the quality of all-inclusiveness. "It is life in the rough, nothing omitted. There are sure to be good things in it. It is as fresh as the May woods." I prefer to try no further declarations, but let any interested person reconcile these two opinions if he so chooses.

The policy of the magazine has not essentially altered in the three years since the first Anthology appeared. With 1920 a series of three prizes, $200, $100, and $50 respectively, was inaugurated, but for 1922 in the interest of democratic fairness, on the

suggestion of Mr. Robert Frost, the arrangement became: a special prize of $50, five first prizes of $40 each, and five seconds of $20 each.

Professor William Lyon Phelps, one of the judges in last year's contest, wrote, "I think your standard is remarkably high and America ought to be proud of you." Confirmations of our steady advance have come in many other ways: in newspaper quotation, the large number of poems taken for other anthologies, greatly increased circulation, etc. Nothing, however, has been so sustaining as the many cordial letters which pour in from all parts of the country.

I believe we have a high standard, but the improvement of CONTEMPORARY VERSE has been but slightly the result of greater experience. It has come rather from the general progress of poetic feeling and craftsmanship in this country and from the special cordiality of the type of poets we believe in. Previously I used the term "the new popular poetry" to describe our preference for simplicity and direct appeal as opposed to the egotism of the futurists. Now I would go back to the word "humanism." CONTEMPORARY VERSE wants poems with the appeal, not of novelty, but of universality; poems that affirm, not the superiority of the few, but the kinship of the many. This does not mean an attempt to write down to a vulgar level, it means that a given poet finds his deepest vitality to be in tune with his fellows. There is, of course, the danger of obviousness, but every fresh conviction of a fundamental truth has an element of originality. As to form, I hold that it comes from a

careful training in tradition, until the special impulse of feeling may become incarnate with "craft of delight and cunning of sound unsought." Poetic style should have finished technic in its imagery and verbal melody, but a principal requisite must be that of appropriateness to the theme and mood. A good style, like good manners, is one that does not call attention to itself. Let all decorative qualities be conditioned upon sincerity and simplicity.

Contemporary Verse has always had a reputation for hospitality to new writers. Many of the poets whom we discovered previous to 1920 have now won wide recognition, and we are proud to represent them again in their fuller development. But we have found others since then, many no less promising than the earlier group. In any case the magazine has given as little weight as possible to mere names, preferring the "what's what" to the "who's who." This no doubt is a cause of the freshness which critics have noted. That many mistakes have been made I freely admit, but in an anthology it is possible to eliminate these by the aid of comment from our readers. The selections here included have been carefully tested out, nothing being retained that does not improve on a second reading. I believe that every poem is worth thinking over and remembering.

And yet, a critic will object, this is a fearfully heterogeneous assortment. It is, but that is because it attempts to represent America as no single author can ever do. I confess to liking a good many kinds of people, for after all what is reading but a series

of adventures in friendship? In this book will be found stark tragedy, romance, satire, quirks of humor, careful portraits, songs of home and nature, and flights of pure imagination. Every part of this country is represented, nearly every type of personality. The one uniting quality of the whole, I should like to think, is the joy of the making. These poems were written because they were lived, and I have put them here because I found in them a more abundant revelation of life today than I have met with in any other book.

In one respect the method of the present anthology differs from that of the former. The best poems have been put in irrespective of whether they have previously been used in other anthologies. Also some dozen poems have been taken from the files of 1916-20 because they served to strengthen and round out the present book. During the last two years a series of editorials was begun. One of these, which expresses the general spirit of the magazine, follows this Introduction.

I wish that readers of this book might see in it not merely an assemblage of verse, but the spiritual record of an entire people; might hear, not smoothly-turned phrases, but the mingled harmony of an impetuous, confused, but in the main happy and kindly nation. Those who deplore our provinciality, our materialism, might then find an evidence that the divine birthright of truth, courage, beauty and cleansing humor had not been bestowed on us in vain. I believe in this anthology because I have had so little to do with its

making. It is not America that should be proud of so imperfect an expression as CONTEMPORARY VERSE, but CONTEMPORARY VERSE that should be proud of America.

FOR THE LOVE OF IT

There is but one adequate reason why a person should scorn delights and live laborious days in the pursuit of poetry. That reason we have given away at the outset in the title of our article. It applies to the reader hardly less than to the writer, for it is much easier to be diverted by the farce or the melodrama of ordinary fiction than to live oneself into the thought and imagination of high poetry. Arnold Bennett, realist that he is supposed to be, says that the reading of novels is nearly useless in training the mind. He recommends, above all, poetry and the novels of Meredith, which require a similar effort and convey a similar inspiration.

Certainly there is nothing reasonable, in the mercantile sense of the word, in devoting part of one's much-needed energies to poetry. Poetry is as unreasonable in its way as love itself, but it seems to suffer more at the hands of the humorists. Love, fortunately, can stand serene against all the arrows of the cleverness-mongers. When we are told that woman shares our joys and doubles our expenses, we laugh without a twinge of bitterness. And if we loved poetry in the same way, with the same unquestioning faith in our spiritual instinct, we should be equally undisturbed by doubts and cavils, whether from within or without.

The trouble often is that our feeling toward poetry is on a lower plane. In the first place, we may insist on caring for poetry only in particular phases. It is as if a husband said, "I like you in your ball-dress, dear, but I am quite indifferent to you in an apron." The genuine lover will be prepared for unexpected beauties, he will not be satisfied with a mere repetition of the same moods and manners. Again, we may find the service of poetry too exacting, too expensive in time and energy. To win the favor of Poetry one must sometimes give what is harder to come by than an automobile or a diamond necklace. These things are tests as to whether one wants a life-long union or a summer flirtation. Those who read or write merely to soothe their nerves, to revel in verbal antics, and to indulge their self-love or their self-pity, need not expect a permanent and increasing enjoyment from their avocation.

Poetry demands above everything disinterestedness. The joy one has in poetry is the joy of giving: of giving one's intelligence in careful training, of giving one's attention with unwearied recurrence; in a word, of giving one's fullest self, like a devotee at prayer or a soldier in the charge. And one must dare not only for great moments, but for the "infinite pains" which are so large a part of genius.

What recompense may the lover of Poetry expect? That which any true lover may expect: the joy of love returned. All of nature, all of life will wear for him a glory that is not "the semblance of a dream," but a new power of living born within himself. He

will be related to all beauty, to all spiritual nobility of all time. He will have the magic gift of appealing in some degree to all men, and in particular to just those comrades of the quest with whom he most longs to associate. The troubles and vexations of life will shrink to their true insignificant proportion. There is even a greater hope than these, which Shelley knew when he spoke of poetry as preserving for us the visitations of immortality. With such prospects before us, can not we rid ourselves of our egotism and press on in our high calling toward the time when

"No one shall work for money and no one shall work for fame"?

SECOND CONTEMPORARY VERSE ANTHOLOGY

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MEDORA ADDISON *

WASTED HOURS

There was a day I wasted long ago,
Lying upon a hillside in the sun—
An April day of wind and drifting clouds,
An idle day and all my work undone.

The little peach trees with their coral skirts
Were dancing up the hillside in the breeze;
The grey walled meadows gleamed like bits of jade
Against the crimson bloom of maple trees.

And I could smell the warmth of trodden grass,
The coolness of a freshly harrowed field;
And I could hear a bluebird's wistful song
Of love and beauty only half revealed.

I have forgotten many April days
But one there is that comes to haunt me still—
A day of feathered trees and windy skies
And wasted hours on a sunlit hill.

* Maiden name of Mrs. Charles R. Nutter, of Concord, Mass., author of *Dreams and a Sword.*

HERVEY ALLEN *

MOMENTS

Moments there are when heart and brain ring clear,
When the eyes see and when the apt ears hear
More in a second's tick than in a year—
Moments at evening when the stars lean near.

And once I thought
Quick instants such as these,
That my new senses caught,
Were promises of vivid days to be
When I should stand grown up,
And brave, and full of careless, flaming song,
And free.

Those days have never come.
And now I know
That in this world of ours
Such moments never grow
Into a day—
Not even into hours—
They are as rare and brief as desert flowers.

* A native of Pittsburgh, but now teaching in Charleston, S. C. Author of two volumes and co-author with DuBose Heyward of *Carolina Chansons*. Winner of a first prize in *Contemporary Verse* for 1922.

There may be worlds where deathless shepherds lie,
Watching their starry flocks graze through the sky,
Pastures of lotus in the fields of space,
White with the tents of an eternal race.
Deep as the eye of a blue, land-locked sea
That timeless calm would seem to you and me;
Its æons short with long felicity,
But strange, how strange!
Without the yeast of change.

Give me no changeless hours, for I know
Moments of earth are sweeter that they go;
Pluck me no deathless roses from the sky;
They bloom forever, but ours wilt and die.
Earth's joys are whetted on her stone of sorrow.
Tears are real tears while we can laugh tomorrow.

KENNETH SLADE ALLING *

RAIN

I never knew how words were vain
  Until I strove to say
The thoughts that fell like the grey rain
  Upon my heart today.

The April rain falls on the earth,
  That waits a while for words,
And then becomes articulate
  In buds and bees and birds.

The thoughts that rain upon my heart
  Bring nothing fair to birth;
Oh God, I kneel before the art,
  Of this great lyrist, earth.

* A New Yorker, on the editorial board of *The Measure.*

JOSEPH AUSLANDER *

BEAUTY WILL WOUND US

Therefore we will give over challenging
The beauty of these things: they conquer us;
And to resist is wild and perilous,
To yield is to assault with every wing
The fortress of the sun; plunge clarioning
Through cloud-rift; to the tide's grave impetus
Reluctantly surrender, amorous
Of each delirium of surrendering.

We will be hostages for bruised blind feet
And nerveless hands and eyes darkened with pain:
Beauty will wound us; lurk in every lane,
Fling banners, golden banners down each street;
Or on some violet evening oriflamme
The blue-white dust of the moon on Notre Dame!

* An instructor at Harvard, contributor to leading magazines. Winner of two first prizes of *Contemporary Verse.*

CLARIBEL WEEKS AVERY *

THE GOLDFINCH

This is the soul of the yellow rose
  That was tethered and mute so long
Darting about on golden wings,
  And glad in the gift of song.

It left its thorns on the mother bush,
  And gave its heart to a bee,
And flies in the golden sunlight now—
  The soul of a rose set free.

* Mrs. Avery is a resident of Rumney, N. H.

KARLE WILSON BAKER*

ANTIQUE

"Spill not thy soul."
Trust not thine Essence to the leaky bowl
Of Circumstance, but make a silver cup
Out of thy Purpose. Therein keep thy Soul,
And bear it toward the heavens lifted up,
Counting what happy chances may befall
But flowers to wreathe it for a festival.

Here is a gift the gods will not despise:
They look, and see their steadfast, mirrored eyes.

* Mrs. Baker, a graduate of the University of Chicago, is now living at Nacogdoches, Texas. She has published two volumes.

MORRIS ABER BEER *

THE CHORUS-MAN

He was only an ornamental chorus-man,
Who had no ambition to play "Hamlet."
But when the bugles of the Great War blew,
He sailed away for France,
With the wonted gayety of an actor
Who climbs aboard the gang-plank
Of a papier-mache ship
In a musical comedy.
The leaves on the tombs of Booth and Irving
Are sere tonight,
But the poppies that toss
Over the grave of a valorous youth
Who went forth singing into battle,
Shall blossom in our hearts
With Shakespeare's dreams.

* Of New York, a teacher, and author of *Songs of Manhattan.*

STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

SONG OF THE CITY TROY

From "The Last Vision of Helen"

A girl went out in the summer skies,
(The dice lie white for the throwing!)
And the sunlight laughed as it kissed her eyes!
(And the wind of Fate is blowing!)

She was ruddy and gold as a changing leaf
When gilded Autumn gathers the sheaf.

She was lily and pale as a sleeping moth
When the full moon bleaches the skies like cloth.

The grass was glad to be under her shoe
The poppy proud to be floor unto
The silvery dance of her feet like dew!

. . . But her lord walks chill as a cloud of snow
Where the kings of the earth are bending the bow.

They are roaring the fame of the flying dart,
But he whispers low, in a place apart,
With the evil ice of his freezing heart.

* One of a family of writers, now a resident of New York. Author of a novel and three volumes of verse. A recent graduate of Yale.

"Helena, Helena, mouth of wine,
Two more days for your sun to shine!

Helena, Helena, mouth of musk,
Two more days and I make you dusk.

Two more nights on your silky bed,
And your lover over it, bloody and dead,
And your body broken as I break bread!"

His lips are writhing, sucking and cold,
His hands are twitching like trees grown old,
He shivers as if he had trod on mold.

The "Golden Queen" at her anchor strains
(Sails on the sapphire, snowing)
Paris walks on the deck like a man in chains
(And the wind of Fate is blowing)

He wastes in his love like leaves in a flame,
But his mind is a spear in a dauntless game,
And the face of his doom has a girl's soft name.

The fifty sailors are whetting their swords.
The brown sun beats on the tarry boards.

And Helena skims by the rolling sand
And waves with the fleck of a foam-white hand.

And the blood of Youth pounds hot in the throat
As the long oars lash from the lunging boat.

Song of the City Troy

Richly she came through the leaping green,
Like the shrine of a god, like a sun first seen,
And they cried "Hurrah for the Golden Queen!"

The white sails soar like a rising gull,
The water spins by the speeding hull.

She smiles with her chin cupped into her hand
At the drowning shadow of fading land
—And Paris shakes like a torching brand.

And Paris crushes her, breath to breath,
And she gives him her honey of love and death.

But chill Menelaus a Fury hath,
He has thawed his hate to a roaring wrath!
He is loosing his hounds on the ocean-path!

The blooms of the years are withered and fall.
(Dawn—and a red flame growing)
And Time's cracked fingers number them all.
(And the wind of Fate is blowing)

And the wooden horse is trampling Troy
As a hoof-thrust crushes a crumpling toy.

Ruddy and gold where the torches stare
Helena sits in her carven chair.

Lovely and strange as a moonlit cloud—
But her head droops down like a petal bowed.

Beneath her the blood and the wine run deep
—But her eyes are seas more quiet than sleep.

The drunkards brawl and the cup goes round;
But she gives no sign and makes no sound.

Shrunk Menelaus has poured her drink;
And she does not sip and she does not shrink.

And her mouth is a flower that says "Depart!"
And the hilt of a knife is under her heart.

The kings of the world have finished their chase,
They dash their wine in the glorious face.

And Paris is dead in a sickly land;
And they wrench the rings from the plume-white hand.

They dice for her rings and the game is sweet
And lean Menelaus is smiling sleet.

And the captains chuckle, counting their scars,
For the hosts of the earth have finished their wars
And Helen and Troy are cold as the stars.

Waves in the dusk with a sound like tears
(And the deep tide foaming and flowing)
Saying one name for a thousand years!
(And the wind of Fate is blowing!)

STEPHEN MOYLAN BIRD * 1897-1919

WILDNESS

My soul-harp never thrills to peaceful tunes;
In Nature's wildness my heart finds its home,
When sporting, playmate to the wind and waves,
O'er the wild Orkneys' battlefields of foam.

My steed a white-maned tempest, wild and gray,
Whose hoofs strike fire from each frightened wave,
While the loud thunder strides the crumbling crags,
And shakes his sabre when the breakers rave.

Why walk, monk-like, in cloistered aisles of peace,
When, whispering on every errant breeze,
Fanning the latent fire of my blood,
Comes the far bugle summons of the seas?

THE CORNISH SEA

Come, we will go, to Land's End bound,
Past lurking cove and breathing sound,
And, o'er the lark-thrilled, dewy lea,
The opal of the Cornish Sea.

* Of Colonial Virginian and Pennsylvania stock. Lived mainly in Galveston, Texas, and died probably by his own hand at West Point. His life and poems are included in a recent volume, *In the Sky Garden*.

There Neptune thrones in royal might,
Watching his white-maned lions fight
And 'neath his frowning gaze, far seen,
The rainbow realm of his demesne.

As changeful as a poet's heart,
As guileful as the coquette's art—
It stole my soul from me away,
And there 'tis dream-chained, night and day.

FORGET ME NOT

At sunset wept a little bloom
That Pan forgot to kiss;
It murmured all the night its plaint,
To be denied such bliss.

Its tiny face was wet with tears,
When rosy came the day;
A sunbeam smiled; embraced it then,
And kissed the tears away.

GAMALIEL BRADFORD *

ARDOR

Others make verses of grace.
  Mine are all muscle and sinew.
Others can picture your face.
  But I all the tumult within you.

Others can give you delight,
  And delight I confess is worth giving.
But my songs must tickle and bite
  And burn with the ardor of living.

WHO

The long and melancholy wind
  Blows over the salt sea;
It sounds like one whose soul has sinned
  And never can get free.

And all our souls alike have sinned
  And who shall set us free?
Oh, sombre, melancholy wind
  And desolate, salt sea.

* Of Wellesley Hills, Mass. Widely known for his biographical essays and studies which have been appearing for many years in *The Atlantic Monthly* and elsewhere. Author in verse of a modern epic and of *Shadow Verses*, a collection of lyrics.

EXIT GOD

Of old our fathers' God was real,
  Something they almost saw,
Which kept them to a stern ideal
  And scourged them into awe.

They walked the narrow path of right,
  Most vigilantly well,
Because they feared eternal night
  And boiling depths of Hell.

Now Hell has wholly boiled away
  And God become a shade.
There is no place for him to stay
  In all the world he made.

The followers of William James
  Still let the Lord exist,
And call him by imposing names,
  A venerable list.

But nerve and muscle only count,
  Gray matter of the brain,
And an astonishing amount
  Of inconvenient pain.

I sometimes wish that God were back
  In this dark world and wide;
For though some virtues he might lack,
  He had his pleasant side.

THE THING TO DO

For, after all, the thing to do
  Is just to put your heart in song,
To let your passions glimmer through,
  Your whole life, be it right or wrong.

And some will laugh and some will frown,
  And some will shake their heads and sigh,
"These things should not be written down"—
  But all will listen eagerly.

ABBIE FARWELL BROWN *

PIRATE TREASURE

A lady loved a swaggering rover;
The seven salt seas he voyaged over,
Bragged of a hoard none could discover,
Hey! Jolly Roger, O.

She bloomed in a mansion dull and stately
And as to Meeting she walked sedately,
From the tail of her eye she liked him greatly,
Hey! Jolly Roger, O.

Rings in his ears and a red sash wore he,
He sang her a song and he told her a story;
"I'll make ye Queen of the Ocean!" swore he,
Hey! Jolly Roger, O.

She crept from bed by her sleeping sister;
By the old grey mill he met and kissed her.
Blue day dawned before they missed her,
Hey! Jolly Roger, O.

And while they prayed her out of Meeting,
Her wild little heart with bliss was beating,
As seaward went the lugger fleeting,
Hey! Jolly Roger, O.

* Of Boston. Author of many books for children and of several poetic volumes.

Choose in haste and repent at leisure;
A buccaneer life is not all pleasure.
He set her ashore with a little treasure,
Hey! Jolly Roger, O.

Off he sailed where waves were dashing,
Knives were gleaming, cutlasses clashing.
And a ship on jagged rocks went crashing,
Hey! Jolly Roger, O.

Over his bones the tides are sweeping
The only trace of the rover sleeping
Is what he left in the lady's keeping,
Hey! Jolly Roger, O.

Two hundred years is his name unspoken,
The secret of his hoard unbroken;
But a black-browed race wears the pirate's token,
Hey! Jolly Roger, O.

Sea-blue eyes that gleam and glisten,
Lips that sing,—and you like to listen,—
A swaggering song. It might be this one;
"Hey! Jolly Roger, O."

JOHN BUNKER *

THE FLUTE-PLAYER

Here on the top o' the windy hill
I'll sit and pipe at my sweet will—
Starry hymns or human strains,
Natural joys or mystic pains,
Rollicking tunes or simple airs,
Just as my own spirit stirs.

Warm odors, leaping colors, flashes of sound
Encompass my senses around:
Wind-wavering fumes from heavy-headed flowers,
Strong cadence of flood waters, mighty powers
Of the untrammeled air, the bright
Delirious magnificence of light.
Unfurled
Lie the glory and the loveliness of the world,
The grandeur and the mystery and the might:
The palpitant, soft-breathing earth
Lazily outstretched in careless beauty;
Gorgeous shows o' the sky
Shot with multitudinous splendors;
Tremendous music

* Of New York. A critical writer who has published a collection of lyrics.

Surging through all creation
As if it would crack the mould of things!

. . . . .

And I with a silly pipe, a useless reed,
Sit silent now at my extremest need.

Here on the top o' the windy hill
I sit alone and still.
Down the shrunk sky the day is ebbing fast.
And now comes creeping
With stealthy, imperceptible approach the filmy twilight;
Onward it sweeps
Billowing mistily up from the valley
And closes over me—
Cool and soft and vague.

I feel about me secret presences,
Frail witcheries, subtle influences;
Shy wistful hues peeping from shadowy places,
Little grey winds skipping among the grasses.
Slender, invisible fingers stray over me
Delicately, tremulously,
And I in sensitive response
Half-consciously breathe into my pipe.
Then at last rises my song,
Swelling forth under the faint stars.
Gracefully my song advances,
Like a maiden dancer
Gracefully it advances under the stars,
Running with silver feet lightly over the sod.

Swiftly, swiftly it dances onward,
Waking the woods as it goes with musical laughter,
Down the slope hill toward the hid horizon,
Till suddenly, far off, in the dusk,
It vanishes,
Leaving me Night and this hush upon the air.

. . . . .

Am I the flute or the flute-player?

RHYS CARPENTER *

CARILLON

Hi, folk, come forth, folk: your beds are in the day;
The light is hammering up his booths in the market overway!
The wind is fair for millers' sails, yet here's no sound of mills;
'Tis jingle of the bells of mules a-stepping down the hills.
The swarthy men of the South are come with all their glimmer-ware
To reach their palms for pennies out and dance in open square.

Hi, folk, come, folk: my heels are at your head
To din against your drowsy ears until ye leave your bed;
Until ye put red aprons on across your skirts of green
And take your dreamy morning prayers to the saints upon the screen,
The little saints with carven eyes and chiselled hats of stone
Who watch your hearts each time ye kneel to the Virgin on her throne.

* A graduate of Columbia, now teaching in the Department of Archæology at Bryn Mawr. Author of two volumes of verse.

Hi, folk, come forth, folk: put on your gladdest gown.
The minstrels march behind the inn with their black
hair hanging down;
And dogs are marching at their heels to see what
they can see;
And pigeons six are on the roof with sleepy heads
a-dree.

Hi, folk, come forth, folk: here's something gay to
greet;
The mules with silver bells atune are trotting down
the street,
And shouting men are swinging sharp with whips
across their feet.
The women with their babies soon ye'll see a-trudging
after;
And ragged boys that tug the goats will move you
all to laughter,
Until ye find their nimble hands have twitched your
purse away.

Hi, folk, come forth, folk: here's festival to-day!

GERTRUDE NASON CARVER*

DAPHNE

As beautiful as Daphne was the goal
My longing strained to reach. Elusive as
Her form so fleet, so fearful, was the thing
I hungered toward with speed-flushed eagerness.
As exquisite in its swift going, dear
And tempting in refusal as the love
Apollo sought, was my evading dream.
Strong as that god for loveliness I raced
Until like him, I touched its contour, caught
A trembling hold on warmth that fed desire.
Ah! Too, too, like him, Daphne of my dreams!
Who changest at my hovering embrace
The very mould that lured me. Lo, I find
Within my startled arms a stranger rests!

A laurel tree perhaps is beautiful—
But oh, it is not love! It is not love!

* Mrs. Alexander H. Carver, since her marriage a resident of Philadelphia. Studied at Vassar.

ELIZABETH J. COATSWORTH *

FLY LOW, VERMILION DRAGON

Fly low, vermilion dragon,
With the moon horns.
Fly down to the top of the mountains
That I may climb into your saddle
And twist a bridle of mist about your great muzzle.

Fly low, vermilion dragon,
With claws bright with stars.
I will climb the dark pagoda of a pine tree
That I may swing astride your brilliant scales
And be carried into the heart of the West,
Through a golden haze
Over the great regions of the sea
Into Cathay.

Fly low, vermilion dragon,
With the moon horns!

CONFESSIONAL

The air is heavy with floating incense
The church is rich and warm and dim

* A graduate of Vassar, chiefly resident at Pasadena, Cal. Her first volume is scheduled for the spring of 1923. Winner of the special *Contemporary Verse* Prize for 1922.

And the young priest pales, and the young priest
trembles
As Amora confesses her sins to him.

In their niches are saints in robes of velvet
Bending forward gracious and slim,
But the young priest knows that none are so lovely
As Amora who whispers her sins to him.

He thinks of God's mercy, he thinks of God's justice
And the fires of hell, undying and grim,
But they melt away in the soft near presence
Of Amora confessing her sins to him.

CHRISTINE TURNER CURTIS *

NEW ENGLAND BEACH

The light is dimming down the cliff,
And on the azure bay
The little waves are almost still,
Save where a restless silver frill
Wimples and sinks away.

The last gold streamers of the west
Blazen the waters wide,
Till all the hollow dips and swells
Are cupped with pink, like cockle shells,
Rocking upon the tide.

And over the soft moving sea
A silken peace is spread.
No shadow of the future lies
Across those lilac-tinted skies—
No hint of pain ahead,—

But a sublime and lofty sense
Of that vast Ocean—Calm—
That cradles all our little days,
And floods the inlets and the bays
With its eternal balm.

* A graduate of Wellesley College, who wrote us from New England.

POWER DALTON*

QUESTION

If I love you,
  Shall I demand
Touch of your lips,
  Touch of your hand?

Is love a gift
  Or masked desire
Taking fuel
  For its own fire?

Shall I barter
  Seeking gain—
Shall I give wings
  Or a chain?

* Mrs. Dalton, a Bostonian, has published *Star Pollen.*

JAMES DALY *

STORM

Black clouds rush towards the moon;
Lightning on the horizon's rim
Suddenly flashes in a whip of light.

The severed clouds are cymbals;
And the mad discords of the storm
Crash through the walls of space.

Liquid strings of a vast harp
Leap from sky to earth,
Twanged by the long hand of the wind.

* Wrote us from Cambridge, Mass.

EARL DANIELS *

CANDLES AT DINNER

Beauty is born when gold-eyed candles glow
Upon a table at the twilight time,
And mirrored flames,—like a many linkéd rime,—
Burn cool in brown mahogany below;
Beauty is born when tinkling lights laugh low
In polished glasses, with a frosty chime,
Or with uncolored quiet spurt and climb
From sober silver,—spurt, and climb, and grow.

But only birth is here. There is increase,
Brimming the heart, in every light that strays
Along your throat; there is the glad surprise
Of pain from too much joy when my eyes cease
Their pilgrimage, and, blurred with beauty, gaze
On loveliness, full-formed, where candles touch your eyes.

* Of Charleston, Ind.

MARY CAROLYN DAVIES *

TO OTHER MARYS

Christ said, "Mary," as he walked within the garden
The morning that he rose from death, calm and free of pain;
The wounds in his hands and his side no longer burned him.
He that once had been a man was a God again.
Christ said, "Mary," as he walked within the garden.
All in his triumphing, back from the dead,
With the wind upon his cheek, while the world was new to him,
"Mary" was the first name he ever said.

The first Mary God chose, he looked about the world for her
And saw her walking with the maids of Galilee;
—She stood beside a clumsy-nailed cross above a hillside,
And saw the babe on it she had held at her knee.—
Christ praised another Mary whom the saints rebuked for wastefulness;
For he understood them well, all Marys of his day,

* Has alternated between Oregon and New York. Author of a novel and two collections of lyrics.

Yes, and of today, too, Marys staid and caring,
Marys wild and home-loving—it was his way.

Martha and Lazarus talked with Christ at supper-time,
Martha and Lazarus, of crops and folk and wars;
But while the food was cleared away, low by the door-step
It was Mary spoke to him, when there were stars.
Not of crops and gossip, not of work and neighbors—
Christ and Mary talked about the wishing to be good
And the easy falling, and the new beginnings,
And the way the moon looked, low above the wood.

Christ said, "Mary," as he walked within the garden;
Startled, Mary Magdalene raised her tear-stained face.
That was very long ago, in a far-off country,
In a far-off country, and a foreign place.
Still each year at Easter-time do we think again of her,
And the other Marys who are dead in the earth,
Who are dead long ago, but who loved and tended him
When our Lord was a man, and felt of tears and mirth.

All the Marys of the world, let us pray together now,
Mary Schwartz, and Mary Brown, and Mary Rosenstein,
Little Mary Donnelly, Mary Holt and Mary Hull,
Mary Olsen, Mary Morse, all in a line.

Since it is the Easter-time, and little bells are ringing,
Let us walk in still pride, with lifting of the head,
For when he had risen from the grave, as all the world knows,
"Mary" was the first name that God ever said.

JULIAN M. DRACHMAN*

NEW LAMPS FOR OLD

Come to me, come! New lamps for old!
I'm a Magician from No-One-Knows-Where.
Here are more lamps than my hands can hold,
Bright new lamps of copper and gold,
Full of smooth oil, with a soft and fair
Little flame that throws its beams to the sky.
I'll give what money can never buy,
Come to me, come! New lamps for old!

Faith? You've an old faith-lamp upstairs
In a dusty garret, away on a shelf,
That flickers and glimmers and pales and flares
Like an ancient hermit saying his prayers
In a dim, deep wood to himself.

Here, let me show you a lamp of faith—
A new, bright lamp, full of amber oil,
Which shines with a hope that is not in Death
But here in the living world of toil;
A deep and splendid and genial glow
To light your steps on the rugged way
With a glory whose brilliancy ever must grow
Till at last it shall be as the sunshine day:

* Born in Greece, now resident in New York.

Faith in the mighty and faith in the fine,
Faith in these brothers and sisters of mine,
  Faith in the light of the human heart
When the thing that it is can be unrolled
  From the tinselled rags that wrap it apart;
Faith in the living and suffering Truth,
In the wisdom of age, in the visions of youth—

Come to me, come! New lamps for old!

Courage? Oh yes, you've a courage-lamp
  Hammered and mightily wrought of steel
From shivered swords and the points of spears
That have come to us clanging across the years,
  Deep with the dint of an armored heel.
Yes, I remember your courage-lamp,
Darkly encrusted with rust, and damp
  With rotting, black blood, and full of tears.
It burns and sputters a lurid flame
  That mingles its reek with the murderous red,
  Like a funeral torch for the sinful dead
On their march to the country without a name.

You're rather proud of the courage-lamp,
  And you set it aloft on a painted pole,
To shed a horror that thrills the Camp
Till the very sheep would roar and ramp,
  And we tear Man's flesh from his aching soul.

Yes, I remember your courage-lamp.
Now, will you look at a thing I've here?
A lamp cut cleanly from crystal clear,

With many corners that catch the light,
Enchanting it into a host of bright,
Bright flashes of every tint you can name.
They seize the beams that are scattered about
By the clear and steady and luminous flame,
Which all are white and which all are the same,
But flashing, dazzling, silver and green,
Golden and glowing in many a sheen,
Come prancing and galloping out.

This is the brand new lamp of the brave
Who dare to be proud of their human joy,
Who dare to hold out a hand to save,
Who will build and never destroy.
Courage! it beams, and *Courage!* it blazes,
That all unarmed in a world of foes
Walks in peace and serenely gazes
Into the other's eyes, and knows
That kisses win kisses, as blows buy blows.
Courage it is that faces the foe,
And fights, and is beaten, and rises again,
And still fights on though torn with pain,
And stumbles forward though blind with woe,
Staggers and falls, and goes below
Still fighting against the victor Fate,
For the only thing that it hates is—Hate.

We and the man that we fight are one,
Coins of one stamp, from one lump of gold;
And thus shall we be when the latest sun
Sinks, and the last far day is done.—

Come to me, come! New lamps for old!

Justice? The lamp that far and wide
Shines with a clear and even flame
Whose bright, white light is ever the same,
Says, "Truth, all truth, whatever betide";
While the timid things that scatter and hide
In dim little corners, foolish, afraid,
Are all in a deep and even shade:
The blank, black shadow of sin and shame.

But, since you've spoken the dreaded word
That would make the pillars of Heaven crumble
And the whole great frame of Creation tumble
Into one awful wreck, if heard
In the thunderous tone of it—let me say
I've got a Justice-lamp right here.
It couldn't be bought—it's far too dear.
Still I'll be happy to give it away.
Who can tell its miraculous beams?
Every sweet glow, yet not too gay.
Naught bars that light, and none who dwell
In any nook of our joyous Earth
Are ever in shadow. It brightens the dreams
Of beggar and toiler and saint, as well
As those of the man of grasp and worth.
Dazzling, it blots the lie from sight,
Which teaches that wrong turns wrong to right.

Hold it up—there! Do you see
That wretch fallen flat in the mud of the gutter?

Brutal of face and shameless is he.
Will you turn in disgust, nor hear him utter
The stupid foulness—his only speech?
Bend low with the lamp. Explore his face.
See how it softens in lines of grace.
Look well at his features; see how each
Is the very spokesman of kingly Man
—Wrenched from his purpose—falsely sold
Into slavery. Stoop, stoop low and reach
Your hand in fellowship. Silence the ban
And speak a welcome. . . . Soon is told
A new, proud tale, a happier plan.

Come to me, come! New lamps for old!

Come to me, come! New lamps for old!
I'm a Magician from No-One-Knows-Where.
Here are lamps that I want you to share,
Bright, new lamps of copper and gold:
A lamp of Justice, a lamp of Faith,
A lamp of Courage—the courage to live
Each for the other, not kill for some wraith;
Justice that will not take but give;
Faith that trusts in the stirring of breath—
More bright lamps than my hands can hold.
Give up your ancient torches of death,
And come to me, come! New lamps for old!

GLENN WARD DRESBACH *

THE PATIO

This place is at its dreams between the walls
That guard it, crumbling as the years go by.
Faint whispers stir in leaves. A gray bird calls
Upon a branch against sun-flooded sky.
The lizards creep to bask upon the stones
Where dainty slippers tapped beneath the stars
So long ago. Now come soft monotones
Where once the hush turned silvery with guitars.

When twilight comes what laughter, faintly heard,
Wakes these red flowers in their olden place?
When stars come out what shadowy shapes are stirred
To life for memory of some lovely face? . . .
What hearts have had and left at last behind
In such a place one feels, but who may find?

* Has alternated between Arizona, Texas, and Illinois. Author of some four volumes of narrative and lyrical verse.

LOUISE DRISCOLL *

NAUSIKAA

You will never be old!
  The days and the years go by,
And centuries have rolled
  Over the Pheacian sky.

But you are a girl and run,
  Fresh bathed and warm and sweet,
After the flying ball,
  On little, sandaled feet.

And with The Wanderer
  We stand for audience,
Pleased with your gaiety,
  Charmed by your innocence.

The women we forget
  Age and die quietly,
But you are a maiden yet,
  Playing beside the sea.

* Of Catskill, N. Y. Studied at Bryn Mawr. Winner of a second *Contemporary Verse* prize in 1921 and a first in 1922. Her first book has appeared recently.

TWO OLD MEN

Sit-by-the-Fire:

Men travel far and far away
To come home on a happy day;
And even they whom the roads call
Who never know a home at all,
They dream, I think, of roads that end
At four walls with a fire and friend!

Foot-loose:

I've never seen a hill but I
Have dreamed a hill behind it,
Nor ever watched a falling star
Without the hope I'd find it,
And all the islands of the sea
Have known my name and called to me!

Sit-by-the-Fire:

I have planted apple trees
And eaten at my pleasure,
My house is full of memories
For an old man to treasure.
This I have and that I have,
And you may see them standing,
Silver in the dining room,
An old clock on the landing!

Foot-loose:

I have neither house nor tree,
Nor heirs alert and knowing,

The four roads of eternity
Are ways I would be going.
Vagabonding in the skies
I will not ask for Paradise!

FOLLY SONG

I would give my wise heart for the foolish heart I had.
Be very kind to Folly, you will miss her when she goes!
Wisdom has no secret way to make the sorry glad,
Nor any small, forgetting songs like those that Folly knows.

When you walk with Wisdom then your feet go slow and steadily,
Dance with Folly while you may, her hour is not long!
And when you are remembering the happy things that used to be,
It's likely you'll be thinking of a little, foolish song.

O, I would give my wisdom for the folly that is dead and done.
Dear, dear Folly with her lids down on her eyes!
Now I'm working quietly upon the task I have begun,
And all my songs are ended since my heart grew wise.

GEORGE ALLAN ENGLAND*

"NO VALUE"

He yawned, and laid his cigarette aside,
And on the baggage-check grimly stamped: "Body," wrote
Two simple words. Scrawled words, with careless fingers. Just a note
Of this poor shipment's worthlessness.
She who had died
Two days before, was sunshine, joy and life
To all of us. For eighteen years her smile
And the warm heart of her, the girlish wile
Had been our earth and heaven.
"Some day, as sweet a wife,"
(We said) "as she has been a girl." And so we dreamed,
Until the echo of her children's feet, it seemed,
Their laughter, even their tears, grew woven fast
To our life's dream-stuff—golden threads that gleamed
Through years of difficult waiting.
Then Death came. They passed,
Those dreams, and all our prayer and all our hoping.
And so we laid her in her coffin gray, and cast

* A Harvard graduate now living near Boston. Has been active in politics. The author of several novels.

In there, beside her, all our youth; and, dazed and groping,
Carried her to a silent, sunlit place
Where autumn oak-leaves would be falling. Left her there,
Who never yet had read the Book of Life—her face
Still pure, still fair.

"No Value." Yes, he wrote that down, and gave
Formal receipt. "No Value," as we bore her toward the grave.
Only a girl, with dear, vague hopes, half-known,
Who now must fare the untrodden paths, alone—
Dark paths and cold, they seemed, for girlhood hardly grown.

Only a young, dead girl, unwooed, unwed.
"No Value." And the world had ceased to turn;
And all the gold from here to Babylon might burn
To dross, unminded, for we bore our dead.
"No Value." Ah, the deep, long thoughts we knew,
And our dim eyes that watched him there, and read!
No Value, now, had starlight, dawn or dew,
Sunset or cloud, or the white blaze of noon,
Or springtime's mantle green, with flowers inwrought,
Or the unfolding tenderness of June,
Or earth or sky, or ocean's tides—how true!

How true he wrote—nor guessed that truth, nor thought!

JOHN FARRAR*

LUCILE

I'm never lonely now when I'm alone.
You grieve because he's dead? He did not die—
Not slowly blotted out like you and I,
But swift, shell-shattered, as he triumphed there,
His soul uplifted suddenly in air,
Like snow, wind-blown.

You cannot rightly know—nor ever see
His vivid eyes, his lips that cover mine.
He's changed? Yes, grown a little bit divine,
Yet, oh, so natural! He's dead, you say?
No! No! He's just come back at last to stay,
His soul grown part of me.

* A recent graduate of Yale, now editor of *The Bookman*. Has published two collections of lyrics and edited two anthologies.

JO FELSHIN *

CREED

If I have Beauty to give, I shall give it simply,
As my mother gave me her breast, as my father taught me prayers.
If I have houses to build they shall be simple.
If I have stories to tell, answers to make,
I shall make them without flourishes, and with a simple heart.
I shall make friends with God,
And give my hand in token of peace to Death;
And have laughter and a friendly heart for men.
I shall accept the years as they steal up, with a faint smile to myself,
And greet Old Age quietly and with gladness,
As a wiser, kindlier friend than Youth.
And I shall live and die not needing hope or knowing fear.
If I have Beauty to give, I shall give it simply,
And be content with silence for an answer.

* A graduate of Columbia.

HELEN FRAZEE-BOWER *

A SONG OF DILIGENCE

Be still, my little, dancing feet
That would go satin-shod!
The road that leads to Workaday
Is long, and straight, and broad.

Be still, my little, eager hands
That clutch at wing and bloom!
The dust-cloth needs a quiet grip,
And steady hands, a broom.

Be still, my little, singing voice
That reaches for a word!
The diligent and competent
Are seen, and never heard

Be still, my little, restless heart
That flutters at a glance!
What would a little kitchen maid
Be doing with romance?

* Of Los Angeles. A frequent contributor to magazines.

REX G. FULLER*

THE ETERNAL REBEL

Salt of the earth am I,
Sullen and prideful, careless, mocking, strong.
So? Do you hate my laughter, little man?
Not as I hate the things at which I laugh!

Who is the better man, then,—you? or I?
I, who can hate,—and laugh,—and make you hate
Just by the laughing at your trifles-heap?
I, who can fight your love, your hate, your fear,
Knowing I lose before I start, and yet
Laugh at your win, and make your winning damn you?
I, who can hate,—but still can laugh?—or you!
You, who can hate but as your pride is touched,
Your maxims jeered, your fear's witch-riders roused?
You! who can only fight for what has died!
Not that I look for truth from you,—but, say!
Who is the better man?

Salt of the earth am I,
Bloody and mirthful, hurling your idols down.
Slay me! Your son shall speak my words, and you

* An architect, living in Charleston, S. C.

Shall pride in mine, that you believe are his!
While I, re-born, will rasp his tender skin,—
Too soft, like yours, to wear a rebel's cloak
Until a generation's use has smoothed
The harshness of its fibre—

Laugh with me!

Ah, no, you cannot. But I still will laugh,—
Rasp you,—and damn your winning. Who am I?
Salt of the earth am I,
Sullen and prideful, careless, mocking, strong.
Look to your law, and perfume its decay!
Sputter your curses! Mouthe your maxims! Slay!
Build you your arch of triumph! But, beneath,
I am the first to walk! It is for that,
I am the Rebel!

JOSEPH ANDREW GALAHAD* 1888-1922

ARGOSY

"Build me a sturdy galleon—
Charter the seven seas—
Ring me a crew
From the heavenly blue—
And name her whatever you please:
But build me a sturdy galleon—
Set me a flowing sail—
And give me a West wind blowing
That shall not fail!"

This was the tune that I used to sing
When the morn of my life was fresh:
When I stood in the strength of my boyhood
And was strange to the ills of flesh.
I ran on a wide and crescent beach;
I laughed at the waves that I could not reach.
I shook my fist at the sea,
And cried—(with a joy in me
That was bigger and stronger
And better than I)
"Ah-ha! I shall play on you by and by!"

* Lived chiefly at Portland, Ore. Was in the army for a time, but spent the last ten years of his life in conflict with tuberculosis. His poems of virile faith attracted the attention of John Masefield and won him an unusually deep response everywhere. A volume will probably be issued shortly.

But the sea rolled on—
And the years rolled on—
And I counted the waves
That had come and gone:
Never a good ship builder
Had answered to my call:
And never a sturdy galleon
My feet had known at all:
And never a West wind—
Never a hail—
From a faery crew
Out of the blue—
Never a sail!

But a great wild storm wind,
Shaking the trees,
Came out of the East
And bent my knees:
Bent my knees and broke my heart
And tore my hopes and dreams
Apart:
Stripped my soul—
Like a worm-eaten leaf:
Dried me as dry as an Autumn sheaf:
Wound me in pain—
Like a spool in thread—
Spun me around to a dizzy head:
Unwound me again—
Again—again—
Then wound me up tighter

With ogreish glee—
That's what the storm wind did for me.

But whiles it grew tired—
More tired than I—
It, being the weaker,
Gave over—to die.
And I lay, wracked,
On a quiet bed,
And shouted aloud
At the storm wind's shroud
And the joy that was not dead.

"Build thee a sturdy galleon—
Charter the seven seas?
For the heart there are other oceans—
There are other ships than these.
I have builded it slim—
And straight and fine:
A beautiful ship
With a swallow's line:
And it rocks outside your window—
Whether East or West wind fail:
Open the sash—
And step outside—
And sail!"

Never a word I answered.
But I thought—"Who mocks me thus?"
And a voice like a reed tone answered,
"I mock no one—
I am Aeriphus.

I am the hope you used to know—
I am the joy you used to be:
I am the wind—
And the ship—
And the ocean—
Come out for a sail with me!
I am the comber racing—
I am the calm control
Of all the unseen forces:
I am your unleashed soul!"

So I leaned and opened the window—
And left my body there:
The poor old tattered clayhouse,
With the cotton wool in its hair.
No more the four walls hold me,
And compass me about:
The sea gulls hear,
And answer
The psalm of joy
That is my shout.

I have built me a sturdy galleon—
I have chartered the seven seas—
And the rims of the other planets
When I tire of the earth and these.
I refuse the rôle of Atlas—
Whatever winds may fail,
Aeriphus waits
By the outer Gates—
I sail!
I *sail!*

LOUISE AYRES GARNETT *

AIN'T GOT TIME TER TARRY

Ain't got time ter tarry,
Run along ter heab'n, run along.
I's got a load ter carry,
Run along ter heab'n, run along.
En I ain't a-gwinter drap it
'Til it's fitten ter mah back;
I's gwinter keep a-totin'
'Til de Day o' Jedgment crack.
Ef you wants ter beat yer burden
Des be frien'ly ter yer pack.
O run along, run along,
Run along ter heab'n, run along.
Run along, run along,
All yer bawn days.
Nigger gotta trabel
A long, long ways.

Ain't got time ter tarry,
Run along ter heab'n, run along.
I's gwinter cotch de ferry,
Run along ter heab'n, run along.
En w'en I meks de crossin'

* Mrs. Garnett lives at Evanston, Ill. A musician poet.

En fin's de yuther side,
I'll give mah pack a mighty hitch
En den I'll let it slide.
I'll say good bye ter totin'
En do nuffin' e'se but bide.
O run along, run along,
Run along ter heab'n, run along.
Run along, run along,
All yer bawn days.
Nigger gotta trabel
A long, long ways.

CAROLINE GILTINAN *

THE BUILDER

The edges of the stones are sharp,
But I shall travel far
For I must seek and seek and seek
Wherever such stones are.

I am building me a secret place
With stones that cut my hands;
But I must build and build and build
Until a temple stands.

SURRENDER

Why have I waited, my darling,
  Always believing you'd come,
Turning away from the others
  With a heart unawakened and numb?
Some instinct for love has preserved me
  A virgin, unconscious and cold
To Life's most beautiful secret,
  Left for our love to unfold.

* Formerly of Philadelphia, now Mrs. Leo P. Harlow of Alexandria, Va. Has published a book of lyrics.

Surrender

When you come, I can see in your manhood
  The strength of my conquering mate;
If I tremble a bit at your vigor,
  In my heart I rejoice at my fate,
And am proud of the power within me
  Which can meet all your hungry demands
When the miracle-current flows through us
  As you hold in your own both my hands.

One glance—and my heart stirs within me:
  One touch—all my blood is aflame:
One kiss—oh, my wonderful lover,
  Leave me the breath for your name!
I am glad that you want me, beloved,
  A woman of fire, yet a maid
Whose lips were untouched till you claimed them—
  And I lie in your arms unafraid.

AMANDA B. HALL*

IDYL

I know a forest, stilly-deep,
As old as Age, as young as Youth,—

(Hush, God and it are fast asleep!)

There crystal rivers tell the truth
To asking trees,

And birds make musical bouquets,
Where shadows go their patterned ways.

From fingers of the breeze . . .

We'll hide us in the green-voiced dell
And waken God, and be made well—

(Oh, never tell, Oh, never tell . . .)

NOCTURNE

I have forgotten daylight's face:
Alone now in my chamber's space

* Of Norwich, Conn. Author of three novels. Her lyrics are to be brought out in the present year. The poem "The Dancer in the Shrine" (*Contemporary Verse*, April, 1920) won the first prize of the Poetry Society for America.

Where midnight and the moon conspire,
Where pale with an intensive fire,
They draw conclusions on the sill,
Across the floor and up the wall,
With dreams still tangled in my hair,
I sit erect. A whippoorwill
Reiterates its crinkled call,
The only trimming of the air,
Transparent as a fairy's dress.
Now all the ties of worldliness
Are severed quite and I may spread
The pinions of myself instead . . .

Sleep lies in shreds about me and I see
That night, which blooms a fleur-de-lis,
Is pledged to silence, till I start
'Twixt terror and delight to hear
The promise it has held so dear
Now broken by my beating heart,
Singing of Heaven in its cell.
Blue echoes in a pearl-pink shell
Are not more delicately shy
Than chords distilled as though they were
The soul's ease of a prisoner,
Or bird, remembering the sky.

At last I lend me to the cry
Of thoughts that suffer to be heard,
To patient footfalls of each word,
Unheeded though so often said,
Starved beauty asking me for bread,

And lovely hopes of yesteryear
Telling their failure, tear by tear,
And youthful vows yet unfulfilled,
Entrusted to my faith to keep,
So restless they will not be stilled,
And love, soft-sighing, in its sleep. . . .

The loud distractions of the day
Had rudely thrust my soul away,
As candles lose themselves in light—
Who ever heard a skylark sing
Save when the soul was listening,
Or saw a star, save in the night?

JOE TINKER

Joe Tinker was the tailor's son:
  Joe Tinker was a troublous elf
Who broke the heart of everyone—
  I don't include myself!

A ne'er-do-well, 'twere hard to find
  Another knave so bold, it's true,
But handsome, if you like that kind—
  I know there's some as do,

Though I'm not one. The devil's wit
  Had Joe—no farthing for the rest!
All day the old men used to sit
  And ripen for his jest . . .

The tailor sewed a crooked seam
  Because his fears were for the lad,
At loss to guess the sort of dream
  Joe Tinker had;—

The sort that made him shun the shop,
  That mellow room with just a door,
And window where the day would drop
  And litter sunlight on the floor,

The sort that egged him to defy
  The pious parent of his youth,
That made the rascal love a lie,
  And tell it for a truth,

And haunt the tavern ceaselessly,
  Half drunk with ale, the sturdy fool,
And with a girl upon his knee,
  Some chit just out of school,

And laughing with his brown throat bare,
  And clothes in rags, but like a king,
Wearing his crazy crown of hair
  And singing as such hoodlums sing!

He never kissed me; had he tried
  He'd soon have met his match, I trow.
I'd not have stood it, and beside
  The others suited Joe.

We played as children, but we fought
  Like cat and dog when we grew big,—
Because I told him what I thought
  He took me for a prig,

And was the readier to tell
  Of his wild pranks, with teasing quips,
Declared he meant his soul for hell,
  And spat with ruddy lips.

He sometimes poached and brought me game
  With solemn mockery and fun,
And when I scolded him for shame
  Left, whistling, with his gun,

And made sport of my innocence,
  So sinful was he to the core;
He only gave his confidence
  To make me hate him more.

Well, once too often for his good
  He bragged out of a brazen throat
About some meeting in the wood
  With some new petticoat,

And her a wedded wife, what's more;
  He told me but to rouse my ire,
For he had played with sparks before,
  But Rose MacKail was fire!

He vowed he'd meet her after dark,
  He went off laughing, flushed with drink,
And he was wayward for a lark,
  But she was worse, I think.

To swing the hammer all day long
  Was Tim's, the blacksmith's, hardy life:
You would have thought a man so strong
  Could break the metal of his wife!

Joe Tinker was her latest then—
  Oh, would the cub be never wise
And learn to walk the world of men
  With sober-seeing eyes?

The sun had passed the mountain's rim,
  The sounds of day had ceased to stir
When I resolved to punish him
  By telling tales of her,

And ran to Tim's the blacksmith's cot,
  Threw wide the door and blundered in
Where he was supping, red and hot,
  With gravy on his chin.

"'Good even', Tim! Your Rose away?
  She's brave to roam at night, I'm told;
Joe Tinker too's a moon-mad jay—
  They'll both be young when you are old—"

I shook with palsy as I spoke,
  And yet Tim never looked at me—
I saw his fury when it woke . . .
  . . . He found them easily . . .

And when I followed him, the trees
  Had arms to guide me and the ground,
All silvery with silences,
  Seemed waiting for a sound,

And there the moonlight showed a face,
  And there Joe Tinker lay at last,
Abandoned in the milky space
  With all his future—past!

And there the scapegrace Joe lay dead,
With tiny dew-drops on his brow:
Oh, fiercely, fiercely then I said,
"Will you cease loving now?"

The primroses against his cheek
Seemed not more purely pale and soft,
And then I knew he would not speak
As I had heard him oft . . .

And anger died before his look
That was so lovely without taint,
Like prophet in the Holy Book,
Or statue of a saint.

. . . . .

The tailor worked with steady hand,
And sewed his son a fitting shroud.
But who, save one, could understand
How grief had made him proud?

Aye, 'tis Joe Tinker's grave I keep,
And I have tended, year by year,—
Such fools we women are who weep
For men not worth a tear!

TO A WAYFARER

Of time is born the day
When hearts, which have their schooling of the bay,
Must know that what the winds presage is true,—
Adventure waits for you!

To a Wayfarer

With blinding wheels of gold the sun rides tall
As though it held the rhythmic reins of all
This traffic of the harbor, this suspense
Of living craft, now dwarfed by the immense
Ambition of the sky-line, morning-kissed
To a bouquet of rose and amethyst.
With beauty as voluminous as thunder
The scene evolves, the flowers of the brine
Distill a strange, intoxicating wonder
Like wine . . .
And ferries ply their purpose here and hence,
And where the sky is robbed of innocence
By racy smoke, like objects in a dream,
The masts of schooners fumble through the steam,
While barges in a line, profanely black,
Yet leave their foamy footprints for a track
Long as the milky way. And over there
A freighter whose propeller drinks the air
Shows water-line red as a poppy's lip.

This is your day, I see your radiant ship
That slept to dream, awaken to the morning
Of its high hope and, sensitive with pride,
Endure the convoy elbowing its side,
And mouthe the long, vexed whistle of a warning. . . .

You too have dreamed. Lay poppy leaves to cool!
A dream awaits you far more beautiful
Beyond the shrill, kaleidoscopic throng
Blurred by your tears, a waking dream instead!
The star-eyed deep shall sing for you its song
And you shall live unhampered as the dead,

To a Wayfarer

Your drowsy ship, once quickened into motion,
Become a steed, whose race-track is the ocean,
A girl with jade and emerald at her breast,
A mystic gull emerging from the west,
A lonely moth, blown far to sea,
A mystery. . . .

The clamor will be calmed now very soon
And quietly as some white, mid-day moon
You shall escape, eluding all demands,
These things to fall away like drowning hands.

But as you go the spirit you once sought
And anguished for in poignant, lovely words,
By loneliness and desperation wrought,
Companions you with her eloping thought
As eager and as faithful as the birds
In waiting deputation.
There will be
Ever, above, below, something of me,—
If, like a glimpse of laughter-shining teeth,
You see a wave break mirthfully beneath,
Then smile with me. Be joyous when you find
My praise in the advertisements of wind,
Or should a wisp of spray as fine as lace
Brush cool and salty lips against your face
Be kind!
(How could I stay and smother in the town?
With four ways wide you will remember that
I never wanted walls to be my gown
Nor could abide a roof to be my hat. . .)

To a Wayfarer

High in the ship's bright battlements we'll climb
To read the grace of gulls in veering rhyme
Till memory make them part of us
And us of them. In wind and weather
All that is God, holy and marvelous,
Let us be lost to find ourselves together!

This is your day; your love will not forget
My love when nights are drenched in violet
For where the mouths of monstrous funnels mar
The dizzy darkness, I will set my star,
White as man's longing in the gate of hell.
My hope shall watch, my faith in you foretell
Fair conquest in the stern crusader's field.
(Oh, never aught of harm a knight befell
Who wore a maiden's lilies on his shield. . .)

Now distance draws you softly from my side,
And suddenly the bright expanse grows wide
As space between my heart-beats.
Never fear
That I may yet enslave you with a tear
Or clinging hands of cowardice to show
Your manhood how my womanhood must grieve:

Yet nothing stays, save sorrow, when you go,
And should you doubt—believe!

HAZEL HALL*

SUNLIGHT THROUGH A WINDOW

Beauty streamed into my hand
In sunlight through a pane of glass;
Now at last I understand
Why suns must pass.

I have held a shadow—cool
Reflection of a burning gold,
And it has been more beautiful
Than hands should hold.

To that delicate tracery
Of light, a force my lips must name
In whispers of uncertainty,
Has answered through me in a flame.

Beauty is a core of fire
To reaching hands; even its far
Passing leaves a hurt desire
Like a scar.

TO A DOOR

Door, you stand in your darkened frame
Mindful of your wooden might,

* Of Portland, Ore. Winner of a first *Contemporary Verse* prize for 1921 and author of two volumes.

Flaunting relentlessly your claim
As guardian of sound and light.

Yet for all your vigil, Door,
Shadows that slip on panting feet
Over your threshold tinge the floor
With what was sunlight on the street.

And sounds fluttering in to die—
(Door, you thought I should not know!)
Were started by an echo's cry
That was a voice not long ago.

STAIRWAYS

Why do I think of stairways
With a rush of hurt surprise?—
Wistful as forgotten love
In remembered eyes,
And fitful as the flutter
Of little draughts of air
That linger on a stairway
As though they loved it there.

New and shining stairways,
Stairways worn and old—
Where rooms are prison places
And corridors are cold—
You intrigue with fancy,
You challenge with a lore
Elusive as a moon's light
Shadowing a floor.

You speak to me not only
With the lure of storied art—
For wonder of old footsteps
Lies lightly on my heart;
More than the reminiscence
Of yesterday's renown—
Laughter that might have floated up,
Echoes that should drift down!

THE GRAY VEIL

Life flings weariness over me
Like a thick gray veil; I see
Through its mesh where suns are cold,
Nights are ancient and dawns are old.

Now at last with glamour gone
I can see the naked dawn;
Gauge the gilded depths of noon,
Coolly question star and moon.

And where fired sunsets pale
I, who wear life's gray veil,
Shall not marvel, shall not care.
No light of earth's however fair,
Robbed of the sting of its surprise,
Can delude my sober eyes.

LONELINESS

Sometimes when I am long alone
I wonder what is loneliness—
This silence like a deep bell's tone—
These moments, motionless?

This hush above the nervous street?—
Removed as is the tree that stands,
Hill-high, with burrowing root-feet
And boughs like reaching hands.

As in my blood I feel life press,
Like sap into the frailest bough,
I think if such is loneliness
Then I am lonely now.

AMORY HARE *

WALKING AT NIGHT

My face is wet with the rain
But my heart is warm to the core,
For I follow at will again
The road that I loved of yore;
And the dim trees beat the dark,
And the swelling ditches moan,
But my heart is a singing, soaring lark
For I travel the road alone.
Alone in the living night
Away from the babble of tongues;
Alone with the old delight
Of the night wind in my lungs;
And the wet air on my cheeks
And the warm blood in my veins,
Alone with the joy he knows who seeks
The thresh of the young spring rains,
With the smell of the pelted earth,
The tearful drip of the trees,
Making him dream of the sound of mirth
That comes with the clearing breeze.
'Tis a rare and wondrous sight

* A Philadelphian, regular contributor to *The Atlantic*. Has published two collections of lyrics.

To tramp the wet awhile
And watch the slow delight
Of the sun's first pallid smile,
And hear the meadows breathe again
And see the far woods turn green,
Drunk with the glory of wind and rain
And the sun's warm smile between!
I have made me a vagrant song,
For my heart is warm to the core,
And I'm glad, O glad that the night is long
For I travel the road once more.
And the dim trees beat the dark
And the swelling ditches moan,
With the joy of the singing, soaring lark
I travel the road, alone!

ROY HELTON*

FROM THREE POEMS ABOUT GHOSTS

"Something was down at the spring, Leidy;
I felt it there,
Just as I bent my back to dip
It touched on my hair."

"What was it, Richard?" "Something cool
That brushed on my face."
"Tonight is dark." "But the stars are out
All over the place."

"What did you see? Don't stand there staring!"
"Nothing much,—
Hardly more than a whiff of light
And a rabbit's touch:

Just as I dipped, there by the cope stone
Over the spring
Something thin like a little crutch
That was the thing."

"Lift my head up! Oh I'd have known him.
What would he say
Waiting there by the spring to hobble
And show me the Way;

* Of southern mountaineer stock, but now a teacher in Philadelphia. A graduate of Pennsylvania, author of a volume, and joint winner of *The Nation's* poetry prize for 1921.

Any sound?'' ''Faint like a gurgle
Of laughter I heard
What was maybe the water dripping,—
Maybe a bird.''

''I'd have heard more. Throw that shawl over.
My old hands are numb;
And plait up my hair in the old time way, so
He'll smile when I come.''

DU BOSE HEYWARD *

GAMESTERS ALL

The river boat had loitered down its way,
The ropes were coiled, and business for the day
Was done. The cruel noon closed slowly down
And cupped the steaming town.
Stray voices called across the blinding heat,
Then drifted off to a shadowy retreat
Among the sheds. The waters of the bay
Sucked away
In tepid swirls
As listless as the day.
Silence closed about me like a wall
Final and obstinate as death.
Until I longed to break it with a call,
Or barter life for one deep, windy breath.

A mellow laugh came rippling
Across the stagnant air
Lifting it into little waves of life.
Then, true and clear,
I caught
A snatch of harmony;

* A business man of Charleston, S. C., but a prime organizer of the South Carolina Poetry Society and co-author of *Carolina Chansons*. Winner of a first *Contemporary Verse* prize for 1921.

Sure, lilting tenor and a drowsing bass,
Elusive chords that weave and interlace,
And poignant little minors broken short
Like robins calling June.
And then the tune:

"Oh, nobody knows when de Lord am goin ter call,
Roll dem bones.
It may be in de Summer time an may be in de Fall,
Roll dem bones.
But yeh got ter leabe yer baby an yer home an all.
So, roll dem bones
Oh, my brudder,
Oh, my brudder,
Oh, my brudder,
Roll dem bones."

There they squatted,
Gambling away
Their meagre pay,
Fatalists all.
I heard the muted fall
Of dice, then the assured
Retrieving sweep of hand on roughened board

I thought it good to see
Four lives so free
From care; so indolently sure of each tomorrow,
And hearts attuned to sing away a sorrow.

Then, like a shot,
Out of the hot,

Still air, I heard a call.
"Throw up your hands,
I've got you all.
It's thirty days for gambling.
Come, Tony, Paul.
Now Joe don't be a fool.
I've got you cool."

I saw his eyes and knew he'd never go;
Not Joe,
The strongest hand in River Bow.
Springing from where he sat, straight, cleanly made,
He soared, a leaping shadow, from the shade
With fifty feet to go.
It was the stiffest hand he ever played.
To win the corner meant
Deep, sweet content
Among his laughing kind.
To lose; to suffer blind,
Degrading slavery upon "The gang".
And killing suns, and fever ridden nights
Behind relentless bars
Of prison cars.

He hung a breathless second in the sun,
The staring road before him; then like one
Who stakes his all, and has a gamester's heart,
His laughter flashed.
He lunged.
I gave a start.
God, what a man!

The massive shoulders hunched, and, as he ran,
With head held low, and splendid length of limb,
I almost felt the beat
Of passionate life that surged in him
And winged his spurning feet.

And then my eyes went dim:
The marshal's gun was out.
I saw the grim,
Short barrel, and his face
Aflame with the excitement of the chase.
He was an honest sportsman, as they go;
He never shot a doe,
Or spotted fawn,
Or partridge on the ground.
And as for Joe—
He'd wait until he had a yard to go,
Then, if he missed, he'd laugh and call it square.
My gaze lept to the corner, waited there.
And now an arm would reach it, I saw hope flare
Across the runner's face.

Then, like a pang
In my own heart,
The pistol rang.

The form I watched soared forward,
Swung the curve. "By God, you've missed."
The marshal shook his head.
No, there he lay, face downward in the road.
"I reckon he was dead

Before he hit the ground,"
The marshal said.
"Just once at fifty feet;
A moving target too.
That's just about as good
As any man could do.
A little tough;
But since he ran
I call it fair enough."

He mopped his head and started down the road.
The silence eddied around him, turned and flowed
Softly back, and pressed against the ears,
Until unnumbered flies set it to droning,
And, down the heat, I heard a woman moaning.

PHOEBE HOFFMAN *

THE CIVIL ENGINEERS

They stormed the forts of Nature,
And marched with blast and drill
On her bulwark cliffs and saping swamps,—
Her strength against their skill.

Though her torrents twisted their bridges
Like the horns of a mountain ram
And burst like a hungry tiger
Through the buttressed walls of their dam;

They threw out new spans like spiders,
And copied the beaver's art,
And broke the desert's slumber
With bloom in its rainless heart.

They tunneled her snowy shoulders,
Or wriggled up like a snake,
And laced her with iron girders
Like a martyr lashed to a stake.

And clove her spine-like ridges
From isthmus shore to shore,
And plied their mighty dredges
As she let the landslides pour.

* A Philadelphian, author of a successful one-act play. The present poem was awarded the medal of the Philadelphia Browning Society.

She was harsh as a fickle mistress,
And stern as an angered god,
Then soft as the lap of a mother,
As they conquered her great untrod.

From the circles around the Arctics
To Cancer and Capricorn,
From the yellow streams of China
To the base of the Matterhorn;

They have vanquished their untamed Mother;
Though she thunders volcanic guns
They force her to do their bidding,
Like masterful rebel sons.

LEYLAND HUCKFIELD *

THE LAND OF PLUMS

This is The Land of Plums: All England knows
Its magic beauty; like a mighty loom
Of giant fabric changing with the days.

First lady elms burst out in blossoming sprays,
Half buds, half flowers, and shake their pollen down;
And last year's leaves are tossed about and whirled—
Along the sunlit streets of Pershore town.

And so comes April. High on Scarry Bank
One sees red shawls in lanes of snowy bloom,
Where village women hoe the mellow soil
On every curve and hollow of the hill
Under the fleece-flocked blue of laughing skies.

Slope after slope; as far as eye can see;
From Evesham to Tewkesbury, up and down,
All Avon's Vale is white with fairy showers
Of petals that continually blow
Upon the vale-folk stooping to their toil.

The centuried elms of Fladbury rise above
The Norman church's square of crumbling stone,

* English by birth, but an American citizen living at Rochester, Minn. His first book is to appear shortly.

Half-hidden in a maze of loveliness—
Even upon the graves pale blossoms press,
As though through some slight mystery of love
That scatters fragrance on the forgotten dead.

Plum petals in a laughing girl's brown hair,
Plum petals blowing in at cottage doors,
Plum petals drifting down on daffodils—
Sweet petals floating, floating everywhere
In that white valley cradled by dark hills.

Autumn is here: The shocks stand in stray fields:
The roads are dim with dust; the loaded drays
Forever come and go.
Fast ripening fruit
Cloys the warm air in these ambrosial days.

Purple and yellow, golden-scarlet, red;
Soft cloudy bloom, like mist against warm skies,
Clinging upon the curves of glowing cheeks
Cuddled in wicker baskets of brown hue—

Rich, meaty, luscious flesh as ever grew
When Father Adam wandered Paradise;
Juices like fairy wine of flowers and dew
Ripened in caverns where no mortal eyes
Ever have looked—nor shall till mirth is dead.

Somewhere a girl is singing in a tree
Perched on a perilous ladder's topmost rung,
Trilling an olden golden melody
Dear to the ears of age, for it was sung
In days when Sweet Nell Gwyn was sorrow-free.

In misty mornings on the Roman road
You see the pickers coming, crook and pail,
And hear a hundred dialects, with words
That were long obsolete in Chaucer's time:
A Glo'ster tinker rails at "thucky wench"—
A barefoot hussy beating a black can
And dancing to a quick old Lowland rhyme.

Her ragged "man" comes shuffling slowly on
Swaying a wrenching, gasping concertina—
And, by his hair, it's plain that he has been a
Guest of the Crown in days—or hours—bygone.

By Wyre's low Saxon church, and by the Cross,
Jangles and bangs a yellow caravan,
Filling the street with war of pot and pan
Until it halts beneath a giant elm
Just opposite the moss-roofed village inn.

(This was where Holland—Gipsy King of yore—
Sent his fist crashing through an oaken door.)

After September things will settle down:
Riot of picking-time a worn-out story,
The rag-scum will have drifted back to town
And left the valley to its Autumn glory.

And then the land will give its soul again
To quiet brooding: last wet leaves will fall,
Till, like a gentle curtain over all,
Will droop the creeping mists, the silent rain.

ARTHUR CREW INMAN *

RIVER SONG

Down the great and ponderous river,
A man, lean, sinewy, tireless,
Poles his deeply laden barge.
And as he poles he chants a song,
Monotonous, dreary, sad,
A song from the centuries past,
Born when the earth and race were young,
Ages and ages ago.

When he is dead,
And the gay poppies on the bank
Flaunt above his grave,
Another,
Even as he,
Will pole his deeply laden barge,
Down the great and ponderous river—
Awhile—
Ere he too passes.

But the song will not die.

* Partly of Georgian descent, now living in Boston. Studied at Haverford College. His third book is now in press.

ELLEN JANSON *

INSCRIPTION ON A GATE

Unless your heart is brave to face
The burning beauty of this place
One hour, and live,—and then go on
Remembering, thru days as wan
And void of beauty as a grave;
Unless the soul of you is brave
Along all weary ways to wait
That hour again, from gray-eyed fate;
Dare not to enter at this gate!

* A resident of Seattle.

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES *

THE UNBORN CHOIR

Before the golden curtains of the dawn
Had been divided in the gates of day,
And while no wind yet wandered out of heaven
To shake the steady flaming of the stars,
I saw, against the hollow dome of night,
A shadowy choir like tremulous white mist
Piled on the bosom of the matin sea.
Auroral faces, limbs impalpable,
Vague breasts and cloudy hair and sunlit eyes
Glimmered and fled away and came again,
Softer than veils of rain, or waterfalls
That drop in dreamy basins in the hills.
Their faces were dim pearls within a net
Of beauty, and their phantom hair was wet
With dew shed in the spaces of the stars.

And as a west wind in an orchard fills
The blue sky and the earth with swirling drifts
Of petals till the world is sweet with snow,
So, myriads on myriads, these white ghosts
In cloudy companies streamed up the sky,
Wavered and faded. Once they shone like gulls

* A professor at the University of Texas. Has published a volume.

Wheeling upon the edges of the world,
And once they faded like a tenuous cloud
Caught in the golden whirlpool of the sun
And dying in fire across the rim of day.

And then I heard like fairy horns in summer
Blowing at eve across the moon-mixed sea,
A wild, aerial music, the shadow of music,
Threaded with silver flutes and rich with storms
Of interwoven voices. Now it was
The choiring of dead poets from their thrones,
And now all heaven was empty save for a rill
Of lonely singing, distant as a bird.

The faint, far music fell about me like
A veil of wondrous visions, and I saw
And sailed strange ships upon great wastes of sea,
Where no life was except an eerie sun,
And weird clouds were upon an ancient sky
Like dragons crawling on an elder world,
And on the vessel's prow the wine-deep waves
Foamed in seaflowers and broke in beads of pearl,
And there no man had ever been, and silence
Sat like a brooding bird upon the waters.

And I beheld gray domes and tottering towers
Lifted like exhalations, and frore walls
Weighty with dreamless years; the palace floors
With restless and perpetual motion flowed,
Paved with bright ocean—emerald and jade
And streaks of creamy foam where cool waves broke
Over smooth stairways, and the refluent tide

Left fans of trickling silver on the stones;
There everlastingly a fountain flowed
Across the flickering porticoes to feed
With glancing rivulets the central deep,
And in those walls nothing had ever been
Save silence, and the slow chime of the sea.

And after that, a vision came of light,
Central, irradiate, pure, whiter than fire,
Than any dream of sorrow lovelier,
Light everlasting, such a light as glows,
In fancy as we think, upon the streams
And fairer valleys of another world,
Venus or Mars, or some remoter star
Hung deep in space, that never knew the pain,
The anguish, the illusion, the regret
Of human life; but spinning in bright bliss
It plunges tenantless through gulfs of night
And shines serenely down.

I sounded chords,
A harper to a giant harp, in halls
Huger than Elephantis; the vast wires
Climbed up, I thought, from chaos into light
And were caught up and held at last in heaven,
And as they trembled, with them trembled stars.
Along the strings a mighty music sighed,
Of memory and death, and to that music
Archangels leaned and listened as it rang.

And then this dimmed and altered, and I saw,
Soaring above the sky great galleries

Wherefrom the universe is as a candle,
A point of glimmering flame against the dark.
And on the summits of those fearful arches
Armies of spirits walked, a cloudy host
Waking from dreams of life to dreams of death
As we hereafter.

Suddenly passed away
These shadows of the shadow of my vision,
The choiring died from heaven, and the dawn
Broadened along the east. O not again
Shall I behold them, not again to music
Shall flocks of silver phantoms storm the skies,
Bringing bright dreams like birds!

But in my soul
I see forever that mysterious choir,
Spirits of unborn flowers, fadeless children,
The birds and beasts and little creeping things
That died in the dark prison-house of birth,
And knew not life nor death nor anything
Of our mortality, but passed at once
To the spiritual city. And I hear
Soft voices in the grass and on the wind,
In summer rains, in snow and air and sky,
Meadows and brooks and hills and everything
Where birth and death alternately are lords,
And know it is their passing, and again
The shards of dream drift through my brain and die.

RALPH M. JONES *

A PRAYER

Great Father of Mankind, I do not ask
A place too near Thy Throne; nor ecstasy
Of harps; nor crown and robe; nor any task
Too high for me.

I am one of simple tastes. Give Thou to me
A sun-drenched window on a shaven lawn,
With here an elm and there a maple-tree,—
And my man John.

Give me the measured dripping from the eaves
Of Summer rain; old Dobbin in his stall;
The scent of apples; and the rustle of leaves
In drowsy Fall.

Give me, when day is done, to watch the flare
Of the pine-knot in ruddy ingle-nook,
With my wife Mary in her easy-chair,—
A pipe and book.

Give me the curly-headed rogue, whose shrill
And careless ways were wont to irk me so,—
Who went away and left the world so still
Eight years ago.

* A minister of Chester, Vt.

A Prayer

Give me—Ah, Lord, the things of yesterday
  Which once I little prized but now do lack,
Were Heaven for me—I only pray
    To have them back.

LUCILE KENDRICK *

MADRINA

What will you do in heaven, O serene
High heart? No angel there will lean
A tired head against your knee at night
For comforting! In that celestial light
Undimmed by doubt, no smallest cherub fears
The dark as I do! There will be no tears
For you to dry—no stumbling saint to bring
Bruised wings, torn robes for your sweet ministering!

Will you be glad—glad when your healing hands
Are folded, and your heart that understands
Is lightened of the burden of my doubt,
My fears, my failures and my hurt sobbed out
To you in darkness? Ah, you're weary now
That all my gifts are grief-stained,—but somehow,
Dearer than laughter will my tears seem then,
You'll wake and want my need of you again!

* Of Macon, Ga.

BERNICE LESBIA KENYON

NOVEMBER NIGHT

Winds in the night pass fitfully, destroying
Silence before them. Peace in the darkened woods
Falls at the sound of scattered leaves, or the rustle
Of long bent grasses—the ghostly fiddly-scraping,
Dark and disturbed, of crisp and hardened sedge;
The snap and crackle of twigs in piles of brush,
As if a creature of shadow trod them under,
Pressing them down among stiff crinkled leaves.
Everywhere the winds move, humming in branches,
Shuddering through the pliant stems of birch,
Making the darkness alive with stranger creatures.

As if these were the last winds in the world,
And other nights held only a frozen stillness,
Tense must I stand and listen; leaning against
The chill of the night, almost unbreathing I wait,
Straining my ears for the distant rush of sound,—
For the gust of wind and footsteps running after,
Down through the darkness over the fallen leaves.

* A graduate of Wellesley, now on the staff of Scribner's. Winner of a *Contemporary Verse* first prize in 1921. Her poems are to appear this season in book form.

JOYCE KILMER *

THE ROBE OF CHRIST

At the foot of the Cross on Calvary
Three soldiers sat and diced,
And one of them was the Devil
And he won the robe of Christ.

When the Devil comes in his proper form
To the chamber where I dwell,
I know him and make the Sign of the Cross
Which drives him back to Hell.

And when he comes like a friendly man
And puts his hand in mine,
The fervor in his voice is not
From love or joy or wine.

And when he comes like a woman
With lovely smiling eyes,
Black dreams float over his golden head
Like a swarm of carrion flies.

Now many a million tortured souls
In his red halls there be,
Why does he spend his subtle craft
In hunting after me?

* The only notable American poet to fall in the war under the stars and stripes. His collected works have been published.

Kings, queens and crested warriors
  Whose memory rings through time,
These are his prey, and what to him
  Is this poor man of rhyme?

That he, with such laborious skill,
  Should change from rôle to rôle,
Should daily act so many a part
  To get my little soul?

Oh, he can be the forest,
  And he can be the sun,
Or a buttercup, or an hour of rest
  When the weary day is done.

I saw him through a thousand veils,
  And has this not sufficed?
Now, must I look on the Devil robed
  In the radiant Robe of Christ?

He comes, and his face is sad and mild,
  With thorns his head is crowned,
There are great bleeding wounds in his feet
  And in each hand a wound.

How can I tell, who am a fool,
  If this be Christ or no?
Those bleeding hands outstretched to me!
  Those eyes that love me so!

I see the Robe—I look—I hope—
  I fear—but there is one
Who will direct my troubled mind;
  Christ's Mother knows Her Son.

O Mother of Good Counsel lend
  Intelligence to me!
Encompass me with wisdom,
  Thou Tower of Ivory!

"This is the Man of Lies," she says,
  "Disguised with fearful art.
He has the wounded hands and feet,
  But not the wounded Heart."

Beside the Cross on Calvary
  She watched them as they diced.
She saw the Devil join the game
  And win the Robe of Christ.

WILLIAM LAIRD *

OH, WHEN I DIE—

The poet names his burial-stead.
That string is frayed by long-stilled hands.
And few, I guess, have the bed
Their half-forgotten verse demands.
To worn string and futile plea
Listen awhile: when I am dead
After all, bury me
Underneath an Apple Tree.

Underneath an Apple Tree—
Let the grim roots work their will—
Grip, suck, strain, distil.
The debtor's body for the debt,
For all the happily heavy score
Of many a revel, against me set
Plain on the Orchard Tavern's door.

What path of mine but knows my debt?
How far apart my cores were thrown!
Town, meadow, peak, shore,
Road, trail, wayside stone,
Hearth, desk, even bed

* The pen-name of a Philadelphian.

(Shudder, Prissy) knew my needs,
And not a core but showed the seeds.
  Milk and honey, wine and bread!
  Wherefore, in the Roman way
  Deal with him who cannot pay—
The debtor's body for the debt:
  After all, bury me
  (If that is all, and this is me)
  Underneath an Apple Tree.

  There is more, as I think:
When I am done with meat and drink
Such as beasts have, there shall be
Other Apples waiting me
  No bodiless ghost can eat of them,
So I shall haunt my burial-tree
  Until the first spring-noon is warm:
My body's master-essences
  Shall climb through bole and branch and stem,
  Slip through soft blossom-throats, and form
About me, at command. How far,
I wonder, those bright Other Orchards are?

HELEN COWLES LE CRON *

PRAYER IN SPRING

Forgive me, God, because I barred my door.
They said your face bore marks of heavy care
And endless time, and I could never bear
That you should touch my little house before.
"It ends too soon," I begged. "A few days more!
My joy is far too brief a thing to share!"
Then April, flinging wide my window there,
Let all your sunshine stream across my floor.

I feel you in the wind, spring-drenched and free.
And in the pale new leaves. Your freshness seems
Like that of buds in rain. Your dawns begin
In splendor, and your wonder steals to me
Like children's clinging fingers in my dreams.
Why, you were Beauty all the time! Come in!

THINGS

All day I've been a-wishing
For things I haven't got:
A quaint old blue delft pitcher,
A rose-filled garden plot,
A dancing-dress of silver,

* A resident of Des Moines, Ia.

A little gate that swings,
A gently curving high-boy;
Ah me, the lovely things !

All day I've borne my wishing
A weight against my heart,
And all my thoughts were longings
To burn and sting and smart;
But now that it is evening,
I'll sit me down to rest,
And watch the twilight soften
The hill's low crest.

Above my small white doorstep
Are stars; the night is still;
Deep are the inky shadows;
Grave is the distant hill.
My heart is hushed with beauty!
My spirit stirs and sings!
. . . Tell me, what is wishing?
And what are Things?

THE BRIDE GOES MARKETING

"Half a dozen oranges, some soap, a cake of yeast"—
(I'll be setting bread tonight;—he'll help.) "a pound of tea,"—
(Feet, be still, you're dancing like the sunshine in the east!
Quiet! Walk sedately now! That grocer-boy might see!)

"Half a dozen oranges"—(I'll wear my blue tonight!
"Blue to match your eyes," he'll say. You poor
old city tree,
Look alive! It's morning, and the world is full of
light!
Yellow like the sunrise quilt my mother made for
me!)

"Half a dozen oranges"—His good-bye kiss was
sweet!)
"Eggs enough for breakfast," (Yes, I'll let that
ironing be
While I patch his old gray coat. Good-bye, you
friendly street!)
"Half a dozen oranges, some soap, a pound of tea."

THE DEPARTMENT STORE WINDOW

Party-clo'es fer rich folks . . . Say, just think o'
wearin' THEM!
Hey, you little gray one with the velvet an' the
fur.—
'Look so kind o' stroky with the rosebuds on your
hem,
I could stand a-starin' till I almost wanta PURR!

Sure, I know it's rainin', Madge; go on an' leave me
be.
Gee, that pink one's swell now,—just a bunch o'
mist an' foam!

'Makes me think o' spring an' flowers an' Simmses apple-tree!
Makes me think o' sunrise in Pa's orchard-lot back home!

Somewheres I was readin' onct how workin' girls like us
Wanted clo'es—swell clo'es like that—so's we could please the men.
MEN! Say, Madge, that made me laugh! I'd never make a fuss,
Wearin' THOSE, if I should never SEE a man again!

Party clo'es fer rich folks . . . What? It's drippin' in your face?
S'pose I care, you fool? GO ON! . . . It's pussy-willow silk.
Wait! I'm sorry, Madgie! See! I'm comin'! . . . Velvet . . . lace. . . .
God, I want 'em. . . . Nothin', Madge. Let's don't forget the milk.

MARY SINTON LEITCH *

THE WINTER WOODS

I love the sober winter woods, the trees
With their clean trunks, and boughs that, clear and bare,
Are etched against the blue, with here and there
A nest more silent for the memories
Of song it holds. I love the calm—the peace—
That broods upon the frozen earth and air.
Summer is wanton, taking thought nor care
For bird or flower, and giving no surcease
Of beauty till the soul is surfeited.
To me the voice of one sweet feathered bard
Who lingers when the rest have taken wing,
One leaf that flames mid others dry and dead,
One winter violet, is more reward
Than all the wealth that summer days can bring.

* Mrs. Leitch, formerly of New York, now lives at Lynnhaven, Va. Her first lyrics were published recently.

ELLIOTT C. LINCOLN *

GRAY BUTTE

Thick brush and fallen timber blocked the way
  Up to the citadel, but there the pines
Broke on the rocky walls in disarray,
  And up above their ragged skirmish lines
Was a great boundlessness of brilliant day.

It caught my throat, that bright immensity
  Of sunny lands beyond the forest ring,
Wide-rolling plains, and blue peaks rising high.
  I looked above, and saw an eagle swing
A long, slow circle on a polished sky.

It was so quiet there, so very still,
  That I could hear the humming of the bees,
The booming of a dove below the hill,
  Each little wind that crept among the trees,—
And once I heard a single goldfinch trill.

Out from his den a fat old woodchuck came,
  And found a sunny place upon a rock,
And stretched himself there; and I did the same,
  And watched the day with him, till eight o'clock,
When the flat sun rolled down in quiet flame.

* Formerly of Washington State, but last heard of near Boston. His first book appeared some three years ago.

And now, whenever things go very wrong,
I like to think of Gray Butte, standing there
Above the pine tops, dreaming to the song
Of wings and winds, warm in the sun-washed air,
Age-old and lonely, calm, and gray, and strong.

HERBERT H. LONGFELLOW*

MIRRORS

I am told that beauty is a reflection.
I am wondering if it is true that beauty does not exist,
That it is a reflection.
If beauty is a reflection there must somewhere be a mirror.
The mirror itself may be beauty.
It is very puzzling.

I am in an elevated train.
An old woman and a young woman are sitting together.
It is by chance that they are sitting together.
They are strangers.

I can see that the young woman is modish.
High heels and pumps are part of her beauty.
A purple hat, the folds of her veil, suggestions of color are parts of her beauty.
Slimness, contour, languor of manner
Industriously support and reassure her beauty.
I can see her beauty.
It is not a reflection.

* A native of Maine and former student at Harvard. Now a business man in Boston. Only distantly connected with the elder poet of the same surname.

I can see the slimness of the old woman.
It is lean.
I am aware of her contour.
It is hungry.
The old woman does not have a purple hat
But there is a veil over her face.
The pattern of the veil is fine and very soft;
It was woven by pain.
The eyes of the old woman have been set in light.
It is not a common light.
It was kindled by joy.
I am not looking at the old woman.
I am looking at a mirror and a reflection.

MARGARET B. McGEE *

OCTOBER

I must stretch, I must drag at myself,
I must tug up, and run.
I must fall, I must twist, I must leap,—
For the summer is done.
I must whirl with the ruddy brown dust in the road
Round and round,
Tumbling over and flying and falling
Like leaves on the ground.
I must crimson my cheek like the sumac
With blood that's astir,
And grow firm like the jolly sweet nut
In the ripening burr.
I must shine, I must shimmer and sing like the sun,
Marching by,
I must tag-heel the wind of this joy to its lair
In the sky.

* Has been living in various cities of the Middle West.

MARGARET McKENNY *

ARCTIC SUMMER

Pale gold and blue,
Tender love and new.

Rolling, mossy tundra,
Jeweled by glacial lakes—
Canopied by the tender, fragile blue of the sky,
An airy blue-bell inverted overhead,
Rayed by the pale gold sun,
That continuously
Pours fruitfulness upon a complaisant earth,
Sunset merging into sunrise, afterglow embracing dawn.

Pale gold and blue,
Tender love and new.

No trees with fluttering new-found leaves,
But frail and fleeting spring the flowers—
Creek banks aflood with rare forget-me-nots—
Forget-me-nots that southern shores have never known,
Reflecting in each tiny face
The pale shade of that clear Arctic sky,

* A resident of Olympia, Washington State.

And tinged in every minute central disk
With sunlit gleam.
And pale gold poppies, bruising at a touch,
Fluttering, fluttering, on a hill-side,
Rounded against the tender blue,
Millions of captive butterflies,
Straining at their emerald bonds.

Pale gold and blue,
Tender love and new.

O northern world
How brief your love-life, but serene,
It is no wonder that the sun,
Skirting with jealous tread the horizon's rim,
Guards fast his bride from the encroaching night.
Long lay her shrouded form encircled by the Aurora's fire;
Long was the battle and hard-fought
To break the barrier of her reserve,
But now all his she lies,
Enveloped in the unsleeping glory of his pale gold rays,
Canopied by the blue-bell summer sky.

LUCIA CLARK MARKHAM*

THE NEW HOUSE

No ancient sorrows haunt these shining walls,
  Nor ghosts of any impotent regret;
  No troubled dream has stirred the silence yet,
Gladness and Hope trip lightly through the halls.

And I who stand upon the threshold fair,
  Of all this loveliness the chatelaine,
  Resolve that never fear nor wrath nor pain
Shall leave its harsh imprint on floor or stair.

These windows shall be wide to heaven's light,
  Soft wind and breath of rose shall wander through,
  Long golden mornings bring their scent and dew,
White dreams of peace irradiate the night.

And they who come long after I am gone,
  When these mute walls are eloquent with age,
  Shall find a rich and gracious heritage
Of restfulness to found their home upon.

On winter nights beside my hearth shut in,
  O will they think with grateful hearts at ease
  Of her who left this legacy of peace,
And smile and say: "How blest she must have been!"?

* Of Lexington, Ky.

SCUDDER MIDDLETON *

THE GIRL

1

That house in which you lived was not your home,
For home's a place where there are faith and love.
Two poor tragedians stalked along those halls,
Betrayed by passion and denied by hope.
They hated you whose beauty brought to mind
The early magic of their common life.
But in your own wise heart you made a home
Where you put secret things like hills and heaven.
You had the independence of the rose,
The bravery of sunlight on the grave.

2

Often you came to the room of many books.
There, upon the floor, under the open window,
You would sit, a young Athena—
The dreams and wisdom of the world around you.
As you read,
The wind, blowing across the honeysuckle,
Played with a ruffle on your dress.

* A New Yorker, engaged in editorial work. The author of two lyrical volumes.

Then you never heard the laughter of the boys
On their way to Tanner's Pool.
Nor the gossip of the trees in the garden.
You had climbed the slender ladders
That lean against the clouds,
You were running in the meadows of the sky.

3

With mottled stones and shoots of yellow willow
You built an altar by the stream
Back of the great white house.
You who were friendly with the flowers
And understood the ways of stars and birds,
Made with your own hands
A thing of beauty.

There you went when the story ended;
When the sun crept under the hill;
When the people of the house were cruel.

You took the violets that grew along the fence
And twined a garland for your secret temple.

4

She was a mother to your hidden self—
A wistful, wrinkled woman who kept young
By watching you and listening to your talk.
How she loved you!
You were the light that made the journey sure.

You never knew the pain beneath her smile
That day you brought the nest of robins home.

"Little children of the birds"—you called them.
You wondered why she turned and walked away.

5

The seed is carried by desolate winds
Blowing down from the autumn night,
While the trees bend close and mutter
Like tired wives confiding
The terrible truths of birth.

6

Once when the snow covered the garden,
You heard a voice that called your name
Over and over,
Mixed with the sound of the world outside.

Then you left the fire in the grate,
The story-book and the water-color beads.
In your room, alone,
You hid your face in the pillow.
You could not stop those tears that burned your eyes,
Those sobs that shook the bed.

Outside the storm ended.
The sun came and the snow on the roof melted:
The falling drops made a music on the walk below.
A blue-bird paused on the garden tree.

When they found you later,
You were fast asleep—
A child no longer.

J. CORSON MILLER*

LET ME BE REMEMBERED!

Let me be remembered, as a child's unfettered
laughter,
Heard beside a cottage when the robin woos its nest;
Or as words of lovers, on a night in summer,
When the scarlet moon goes to rest.

Let me be remembered, as an apple-blossom blowing,
Brimmed with earth's wild fragrance for a dreamer's
thirsty brain;
Or as strong-thewed oaks that toss their towering
arms at sunset,
While a thrush spills music with a rainbow after rain.

As a soft word spoken, let me be remembered!
On a blue-roofed morning when the hills are girt with
gold;
As a mother's kisses, when her loyal arms grow
weaker,
Let me be remembered, as her babes that have grown
old.

As a bell at twilight, tolling in a valley,
Listened to by old men there with bated breath;
Let me be remembered as a lad that oft made merry—
Nothing else shall matter after death.

* A newspaper writer of Buffalo. His first book appeared in 1922.

DAVID MORTON *

THE SCHOOL BOY READS HIS ILIAD

The sounding battle leaves him nodding still:
  The din of javelins at the distant wall
Is far too faint to wake that weary will
  That all but sleeps for cities where they fall.
He cares not if this Helen's face were fair,
  Nor if the thousand ships shall go or stay;
In vain the rumbling chariots throng the air
  With sounds the centuries shall not hush away.

Beyond the window where the Spring is new,
  Are marbles in a square, and tops again,
And floating voices tell him what they do,
  Luring his thought from these long-warring men,—
And though the camp be visited with Gods,
  He dreams of marbles and of tops, and nods.

* Originally a newspaper writer of Louisville, but now teaching at Morristown, N. J. Author of *Ships in Harbor,* consisting largely of sonnets. Winner of a *Contemporary Verse* prize of $100 in 1920.

CHARLES R. MURPHY*

A PORTRAIT

Being a little slyer than his neighbours
Was not in him a reason for dislike
To anyone that cared to notice him;
Nor were the sudden liftings of his eyes,
That showed a mind where mind was unexpected,
Disturbing to the equanimity
Of any passer-by; his glance was hurtless
As that of any bird and made you feel,
Not so much foolish, as apart. As cool
As the axe he shouldered to the winter woods,
As unconcerned about what you might fear
As any log he pulled across the snow.
Needing no more your pity than a rock
Needs stroking, cat-wise, to make it serene,
He was himself with pipe and axe and a coat
A little less than warm. Your charity,
As useless as the grief of fallen leaves
Unwintered by a hope that may turn green,
Was for him no food; and his charity
Was solely being what we seldom are—

* Of a Philadelphia family, but of late a migrant between California and Rockport, Mass. Has published translations of Verhaeren.

Fearless of uncharity for ourselves,
And perhaps in showing how it is to take
The serious business that we make of life
Not quite so seriously. And furthermore,
No one had cornered envy in his eyes
For what he would or could not use of life
That other men held dear, nor was he much
Belabored by the gossip of the women,
But like a field remote from the trough of valley
Had peace beyond the pathway of the storm.
And peace he had and an obscure delight,
Though you might call it being never drunk
But only less forlorn; yet in your mind
The grey of rocks that were his truest neighbours
Combined no closer with their slow content,
Than thought of this man with a triumph lurking
In distant nearness; triumph beyond our triumph
Of souls that draw their bodies from the earth,
As sun the dew, to put on flesh and glory
For the feast; beyond, because without the asking
He would perhaps be given other things
Than cosmic domesticity to make
His duty, other meek paths of time that he
Might follow dimly and hear the singing still,
Low-swelling in the distant house, since space
Might yet have graciousness of room to give
To wanderers to the fullness of all spirit.
In any case a thought somewhat like this
Was easier come by than no thought at all
When you happened to notice him; and it seemed
proper

To let him have his way in fallow lands,
Remote from fields of glory, where perhaps
Dark places might in some unobvious way
Be warmed because an old man lit his pipe.

PAUL S. NICKERSON *

THE VASE OF LEAVES

Too often have I thought of Thee, Dear God,
In spacious platitudes, half meaningless,
Yet Thou hast come so near to me this day
That I am newly born, or so it seems,
Among the common comforts of the earth.
I came upon a vase of autumn leaves—
Leaves green, leaves golden—purple—orange—red—
Caught from the fullness of the waning year;
And as I looked at them, You came to me
Along their trembling hues. I felt Your Hand
Hold tenderly beneath my shaking heart,
Your Breath lie like a petal on my soul,
While close about my being clung Your Smile
As cool and peaceful as the sheen of silver.
How near You were, yet I was not afraid:
I could have touched You in your vase of leaves,
Held your Compassion naked in my hands,
Your softly throbbing Heart's Love to my breast;
But I did not reach my hands—I know not why—
Perhaps I was too happy to be wise,
Too happy just to have You standing there—

* A graduate of Bates College and Harvard, head master of a school in Canton, Mass. Editor of *The Gleam,* a poetry magazine for school children.

So happy that my eyes were thick with tears
That You should come in such simplicity—a vase
Of aged autumn leaves, and You, and I.
How kind You were. I shall remember long.
I shall remember, when the leaves turn bright
Upon my boughs in autumn—as they fall
Like tears of beauty to eternal rest. . . .
Meanwhile since beauty is the sighing bridge
You cross from holy deeps to my lone heart,
I must hold beauty ever at my soul
That I may not forget and think of You
As infinite instead of near and dear.

RUTHELE NOVAK *

PEACH BLOSSOMS

When I look out my window
I can see a little roof,
Such a saucy little roof,
With a chimney that is cozy!
And above the little chimney
Shines a little star at night,
Shines a chummy little star.
And behind the saucy little roof
Hides the timid dawn of mornings,
Hides the color of the dawn!
But when I looked out this morning,
Why, when I looked out today
I beheld a fairy caller,
Such a frothy, pinky fairy
Poised below the cozy chimney,
Poised below the saucy roof,
Such a swirl of lacy pink!
Why, I could hardly think.
But my fairy was a peach tree
And she came to say that spring
Has arrived to stay with us
And she hopes we're glad to have her!
Well, we are!

* Lives in Atlanta.

WADE OLIVER *

WHEN I CONSIDER

When I consider how my heavy touch,
My blundering hands unschooled in tenderness
So well might hurt you whom I love so much,
Bedim the beauty that I nightly bless,
I almost wish that passion had delayed
Beyond your time of flowering. O my own,
I love you so that I am half afraid
When darkness comes! An aching flame upblown
My vision sees your slim, dear shadow pass
The lighted window; like a prayer it seems
To come to me across the starry grass
Light with all loveliness and lovely dreams;
And when you call I almost fear to go.
Sweet of my heart, I love, I love you so!

* Engaged in scientific research in Brooklyn.

DOROTHY PAGE *

BEWILDERMENT

Two years . . . and in that time I've learned, I've known
All the blind, hopeless tragedy of youth.
Youth's tragedy? A young life hurt and thrown
Aside, that it might learn what age calls truth.

(Loved one, can there be greater truth to know
Than the boy's love I gave two years ago?)

That's past; the lesson's learned . . . the gain is small . . .
I've taught my lips to say, "Well, it was best!"
Another year, perhaps I'll learn to call
Age very wise, and acquiescence, rest.

(But why, if thought and time have proved it right,
Why do I wake and sob your name . . . at night?)

ALL IN THE EARLY MORNING

I heard Dawn sing upon the hills
And flinging sleep aside I rushed
Through all the magic night distils,
Up woodsy paths a-drowse and hushed.

* A resident of San Francisco.

And oh! The way was sweet . . . wine sweet!
  The pungent trees each flung a spray
Of icy pearls against my feet
  And budded creepers barred the way

Where toad-stools sheltered startled gnomes;
  Their eyes shone out like tiny moons
And when I passed their speckled homes
  They shouted tiny ribald tunes.

And all this time I heard Dawn sing
  "Come out! I've larkspur here today,
Blue dragon-flies are on the wing
  And baby chipmonks start their play!"

But as I clattered on, an elf
  Recovering from my advent's shock,
Spun far ahead and turned himself
  Into a rolling, slippery rock. . . .

We came together . . . rock and I,
  And plunged into a sweet-grass nook
Where thirty waiting gnomes gave cry
  "Oh Dawn . . . come here, come here and look!"

They leaped about me where I sprawled
  All breathless in that grassy cup;
"*Next* time you'll make less noise!" one bawled,
  "A-wakin' everybody up!"

And Dawn? She leaned against a tree
  And laughed . . . and laughed until she cried;
A blue-jay screeched his wit at me
  Then spread the tale abroad (and lied!) . . .

I gained my feet at last and pinned
  My rents together, but the Dawn
Fled giggling, and the filmy wind
  Was all that showed the way she'd gone.

I found it fluttering, her lace,
  Caught in a pink young wild-rose,
The grass was waving from her pace
  But where the Dawn went . . . no one knows!

ANTOINETTE DE COURSEY PATTERSON *

IN A MOONLIT GARDEN

The moon has cast a spell upon my garden;
Wherever she has laid her cool white fingers
The flowers all yield to her enchantress' sway,
Lilies have added cubits to their stature—
For see how long now are their slender shadows
Stretching so black across the shining way!
The petals of the columbines and roses
And the blue lupins all are touched with silver—
Each pansy's face has lost its look of fun.
But strangest is the spell upon my fountain;
No naiad is it now, but a young gambler,
Tossing up shining pennies one by one.
And very deep appears its shallow basin—
As deep as is the moss that holds my footprints—
And all its fish seem carven, stone-like things;
While for the song these waters sang at morning,
Tinkling in happy chorus with the thrushes,
Prevails a stillness, as of muted strings.

* Mrs. T. H. H. Patterson, a Philadelphian, has published both poems and stories for children. Also interested in painting.

WILLIAM ALEXANDER PERCY*

A LITTLE PAGE'S SONG

(*13th Century*)

God's lark at morning I would be!
I'd set my heart within a tree
Close to His bed and sing to Him
    Right merrily
    A sunrise hymn.

At night I'd be God's troubadour!
Beneath His starry walls I'd pour
Across the moat such roundelays
    He'd love me sure—
    And maybe praise!

A MEMORY

I saw four days of spring come floating down
Among the hard-gray lonely days of winter.
They came with full-blown warmth down the blue air
Like four pink petals shook from a loose wild-rose
Or four pink clouds crossing an April sunrise
Or four young pilgrims stolled in misty rose,
Smelling of musk and with an eastern grace.
And as they fell, softly, one after one,

* Of Greenville, Miss. Graduate of Sewanee and the Harvard Law School. Will shortly bring out his third book of poems.

On the shrivelled earth, delight returned, long absent:
The single trees in the fields, the many trees
In the woods wrapped them in webs of rainbow gauze;
Lads dreamed of braided tresses, and the breeze
Of clear, clear water falling in pure sunlight;
Violets came, the purple and the gray

Wild sort that flaunt themselves and have no smell;
The jonquils trooped out in their sky-gold dresses,
Nodding and whispering like girls from school;
The great oaks seemed a haze the breeze might scatter,
The blackbirds creaked and coughed on every bough;
The weeping willows veiled in amber green
Danced in the rhythm of spring waterfalls;
And there was wistfulness and joy four days and nights.
Then came the frost:
The wizened buds lay speckled on the ground,
Winter came back, more bitter for its going.
Four days of spring and of a spring long past!
You ask me why I should remember them?
If you had ever loved and been beloved,
Even so briefly as four days and nights,
You would remember many things perhaps
That now I think you do not even see.

THE GREEN BIRD SEETH ISEULT

A green bird on a golden bush,
And the leaves chimed out and spake:
"What have you seen, what heard, green bird,
Since you heard the blue day break?"

"A sea, a sea, a saffron sea,
And a creamy warm full sail
Floating beneath me as I flew,
And my shadow stamped the sail
Like a clover leaf, a green clover leaf,
Blown from an Irish dale."

"Did lovers pale stand by the sail
That furroughed the Irish sea?
Did you catch the glimmer of golden mail
Or the glimmer of hair blown free?"

"Golden each scale of his burnished mail
And her hair was bronze and gold:
From an emerald cup I saw them sup
That their four hands scarce could hold."

"Delight and woe, delight and woe,
Bird of the Irish sea—
These they drank up from the emerald cup
On the sun-swooned saffron sea."

"Only delight, only delight,
While the beautiful burning blue daylight
Was dappled by me
With the green leaf-shadow shapen in three.
Delight I saw, delight I heard!"
Sang the sunlight-aureoled emerald bird
To the golden tree
Deliriously.

LILLA CABOT PERRY*

HOW DOES A WOMAN LOVE?

How does a woman love? . . . If she were free
To tell her love in one revealing word
It would remain unuttered and unheard;
An unacknowledged joy, a mystery
Even to herself. Her love may never be
Proclaimed or whispered, since that all unstirred
She hides it in her breast as might a bird
Brood o'er her young in some deep-hearted tree.

Thus she conceals her treasure; and her song
Is silent when she hears a footstep pass:
Then, with circuitous flight in the long grass,
Before you she appears, limping along,
Enticing your pursuit with moaning cries,
Soon with swift flight to mock you from the skies.

* Mrs. Thomas S. Perry. A Bostonian, chiefly known as a painter, but also a translator and author of poetic volumes.

EDWARD H. PFEIFFER*

CONFESSETH THE IMAGE-BREAKER

"I laugh at the fools who listen
To the bitter songs I sing,
Whose mean, lewd eyeballs glisten
When they hear the hiss of my sting.

"White meal-sacks forward leaning,
A-gape with an idiot's glee,
Oh, yes, they fathom my meaning . . .
Do they think that they fathom me?

"What if I scoff at the Maker,
Cursing religion as art? . . .
Pity the image-breaker . . .
The image I break is my heart."

* A Columbia graduate now in Redlands, Cal.

FRANCES DICKENSON PINDER*

SONNETS

I

It seems so long ago—that night I stood,
Importunate of Spring, withdrawn, apart,
Here in the prescient silence of the wood,
The wings of rapture fluttering in my heart . . .

The moon-pale hush, more poignant than a cry,
Fraught with strange errantries that have no word,
Knit the tranced earth unto the waiting sky
With shy expectancies that faintly stirred

The leafy dusk, as when upon a spray
Night flowers unfold their ardors to the dew;
And Love among such rhapsodies astray
Let fall, as one of these, a dream of you. . . .

While the new moon wove on a star-hung tree
The grey lace of the young leaves over me.

II

And then you came . . . and it was Spring again,
Despite the stark denial of the snow,
The mocking imps of firelight at the pane
That peered into the dusk to see us go

* Mrs. Pinder is a resident of Jacksonville, Fla.

With April in our hearts to meet the moon
That waited in the bare wood to redeem
Her prophecies, and grant us all the boon
Of promises that flowered in a dream

Upon just such a silver night as this. . . .
And there was sheen of petals in the air,
As then, and in the white hush, at your kiss,
It seemed the Spring stood dimly smiling, fair. . . .

Till looking up, I almost thought to see
The grey lace of the young leaves over me.

III

But now, though blossoms whiten in the dusk
Once more, and like a lone magnolia bloom
The moon emerges from its ebon husk,
Unfurling flower-wise against the gloom,

My heart is cold as though a chill wind blew,
And as the drifted snow my somber grief
Lies deep above love's fragile bud that knew
So pitiful a burgeoning and brief. . . .

And though the Spring come calling as before,
Sandaled with wonder and the old delight,
To strew the moon's pale petals at my door,
I hide me from her beauty in the night—

Lest haply she should fling in thoughtless glee
The grey lace of the young leaves over me.

IV

I know not where you are . . . if it be spring . . .
If on the haunted threshold of some star
You pluck a ghostly flower, remembering . . .
While ecstasies wing past you from afar

Till all the sunless radiance of space
Breaks into bloom about you, and you stand
With April's kisses on your upturned face,
The flower of heaven forgotten in your hand.

But if on such a moment I might rise
To you upon the pinions of a prayer,
'Twould always then be Spring in Paradise,
And by that Tree together kneeling there,

The fairest of all fairest things would be
The grey lace of the young leaves over me!

BERNARD RAYMUND *

THE DARK POOL

I know a pool where laughter never was,
No bird spread dripping feathers to the sun,
And no flower stood on tiptoe in the grass
To wonder at itself. The minnows run
From stone to stone, unbodied, shadowless;
And water-striders thread their secret way
Under gnarled, ancient roots and tangled cress.
I know a pool that on the windiest day
From bank to bank will not a ruffle show;
And never a willow leaf put out its sail
To find if all the wonders could be so
It gathered from the old tree's misty tale.
But all tired waters pause in that cool deep
To dream of other, farther pools and sleep.

* Has recently moved from Chicago to Cleveland. His first book appeared in 1922.

LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE *

ELLEN HANGING CLOTHES

The maid is out in the soft April light,
Our store of linen hanging up to dry;
On clump of box, on the small grass there lie
Bits of thin lace, and broidery blossom-white.
And something makes tall Ellen—air or look—
Or else but that most ancient, simple thing,
Hanging the clothes upon a day in spring,
Like to a Greek girl cut out an old book.
The wet white flaps; a tune just come to mind,
The sound brims the still rooms. Our flags are out,
Blue by the box, blue by the kitchen stair;
Betwixt the twain she trips across the wind,
Her warm hair blown all cloudy-wise about,
Slim as the flags, and every whit as fair.

* Of Baltimore. One of the best known of living American poets.

LUCILE RICE *

ON AWAKENING

Give me something to hold my dreams!
A crystal jar, ringing faintly with rainbow lights,—
A golden platter, massive with many strokes of a little hammer,—
Or a silver bowl, carven with twisting vines
And tiny faces, half-concealed;
Something I may heap my dreams upon
In pyramidal form,
Or pour them in like silver,
That I may show them to my own Belov'd.
Bring me something quickly! Quickly!
Before they have slipped away from me and vanished
Like the star-dust, the moon-gold, and the night-magic.—
Killed by the gray light of early morning.

* A Bostonian, best known for her dance interpretations of the Orient.

MARGARET TOD RITTER *

SONNET TO A PLOUGH-WOMAN OF NORWAY

Deep-bosomed, stalwart-limbed, superbly made,
Unconscious of her power and her grace,
Accustomed to the blowzy wind's embrace,
Magnificent, unlettered, unafraid.
She guides her course past interlacing streams
Striding the fields behind her ancient plough,
Or halts beneath some blossoming, frail bough
To rest her beast and give herself to dreams.
Her eyes survey the road, the moor, the peat,
With wide, untroubled gaze, she plays no part,
No joys rise up to suffocate her heart
Because a smile falls lightly at her feet.
To one who comes for her at dusk, perchance,
She lifts a brief, intoxicated glance

* Lives at Colorado Springs, Col.

ROBERT J. ROE*

SPRING SONG

Hold me out the young branch, Master,
That I may swing on it:
For the soles of my feet
Ache with the sweet thrill
Of the earth, bursting with life,
Sending shooting pains along my limbs.

Hold me out the young branch,
The bending, wild branch, Master,
Knobby with sticky buds—
For there is sap in me, Master,
Sap, and the crackling green laughter
Of buds.

MORAL

I am taken suddenly aback
To learn
That what I thought was wrong
Is not:
I am astounded with joy
To find everything beautiful
And no evil anywhere.

* After ten years as a sailor, rancher, soldier, lumberman, etc., has settled in New York. Winner of a recent prize for the best poems by a writer under thirty.

Now I will have to be twice as careful
About what I do,
And what admit to admiration.

DAWN AT SEA

The Dawn comes in
Like a Syrian peddler,
Swarthy-faced, with gleaming earrings of gold.
And with a dramatic gesture
Suddenly tumbles out
Tangled skeins of lace
On the blue carpet.

IMMORTALITY

I am no brooder on death.
No calculator as to what I shall lose
Or what gain.
But this I knew once,
That day when my foot slipped
While making fast the foretopsail
And I clung in space:
My essence has impregnated the world,
Modified it, leavened it.
What you see, dies,
But the essential me
Is everlasting:
Straining through minds
To eternity.

RECUPERATED

Oh, ho! Now I am masterful!
Now I am filled with power.
Now I am brutally myself again
And my own man.

For I have been among my hills today,
On the scarred dumb rocks standing;
With the imperturbable brown rocks
Diligently sleeping at my feet
Like mammoth beasts.
Resolute, uncouth, brutal and strong
I stood upon the scarred rocks
With the brown, dry wind in my hair.

Down across the desert
That is like a cracked saucer of topaz
For forty level miles
I saw the mountains lying on the edge
Like a tapered bar of rough-gouged sapphire.

I have taken all his strength—
This quiescent fortitude of mountains,
This sharp dry life of the desert,
To myself.
It is mine and I part of it.

Now no longer am I
A poet of soft flesh and silken pillows.
Now no longer flabby
But glorious with life.
Part of it, conscious and boastful.

I will bring my gift of life to you
Or to whoever can use it
In the same rough unpolished state
That I will bring it.

Oh, ho!
Now I am strong again!
Now am I masterful.
Now I am myself,
The worker of life miracles.

F. LAYTON RUMRY *

ON GOSSAMER WING

I came last night to sit cuddled up in your window
sill,
Not by train, or by car,
But riding eerily down a moonbeam.

I watched you combing your short black hair,
Letting it fall
Pictishly to white, sharp, shoulder blades.

I was cold and shivered, but you missed not a stroke
Nor thought of me,
Though I gathered star dust
And pelted your night-robed figure,
Spotting it with silver light,
Watching gleefully
The glistening, glittering bits
Shine in your hair.

Then I missed my aim
Straight into your eyes
Came that dust of a thousand dreams, and you
Slipped silently, sleepily, to bed.

* Of Chicago.

LEW SARETT *

WIND IN THE PINE

Oh, I can hear you, God,—above the cry
  Of the tossing trees,—
Rolling your slow, black tides across the sky,
  And splashing your silvery seas
    Over the pine,
    To the water-line
  Of the moon.
  Oh, I can hear you, God,——
    Above the wail of the loon,—
  When the pine-tops pitch and nod—
  Chanting your melodies
Of ghostly waterfalls and avalanches,
Swashing your wind among the branches
  To make them pure and white.

Wash over me, God, with your piney breeze,
  And your moon's wet-silver pool;
    Wash over me, God, with your wind and your night,
And leave me clean and cool.

* Woodsman, student of Indian lore, and professor at Northwestern University. His second book of poems has just come out.

GEORGE BRANDON SAUL *

"... AS THE VIOLETS CAME"

Some love may come like a call to wars
  In a gale of glory that blinds and thrills;
But my love came like the breaking stars
  In a sudden hush on the summer hills.

Some love may come like a storm that swells
  In the August sky as the daylight wanes;
But my love came like the sound of bells
  The winds have drifted across the plains.

Some love may come like a flame that's drawn
  Thru ruins crackling across the night;
But my love came like a breaking dawn
  On the daisy hills where the world is white.

For Love, as they say, may come like flame,
  Or a challenge gay, or a wind untrue;
But my love came as the violets came
  In the quiet fields when the spring was new.

DIALOGUE

"There's a wind in the stars tonight, a wind, brother,
  —Better the hearth tonight!—

* Lived at Shoemakerville, Pa., previous to studying at the University of Pennsylvania, where he is now an undergraduate.

And they're tangled all like the foam that a witch has troubled,
Brother, Brother,
—Better the hearth tonight, brother!"

" . . . No; it's the road I'll take . . . "

"The dogs are barking across the moors, brother,
—Better the sheets tonight!—
But why they're loud there's none but the dead could tell you,
Brother, Brother,
—Better the sheets tonight, brother!"

" . . . No; it's the moors I'll choose . . . "

"There's a Death and he walks on the hills, I know, brother,
—Better the house tonight!—
His breath is the day that was—and he waits you, brother;
Brother, Brother,
—Better the house tonight, brother!"

" . . . No; it's the Hour I'll meet . . . "

LET HER ALONE

Let her alone! Her sorrow is in the rain,
Poor ghost, out there tonight in the glen alone;
And if she'd lived—well, keep your curse for the moon;
—Perhaps the smoke of her love had sparks of its own.

And who are we to be crying her young soul down
Whose poor white arms have laid their burden
away,
Sad girl with the breasts so early to nourish care!
—Sure, it's us ourselves that the wind'll call some
day.

RAIN AT DUSK

Under the boughs the shadows crouch
And huddle like fears in a troubled brain;
The dusk creeps up like a slow disease,
With a face as grey as the falling rain.

And, drab as a dusk could never be,
A man slinks by in the cold and wet. . . .
Now Christ forget that a roof is mine,—
Forget!—Forget!

MARJORIE ALLEN SEIFFERT*

SEQUENCE

I

I wait for a miracle, as long ago
I waited for love. There is something childlike still
In my expectance, for how well I know
There is no enchanted summer beyond the hill!

There is no god-like beauty, no touch of flame,
No wakening voice, no glance like a golden wing;
When I was young I waited for love. It came
Slowly, doubtfully, like a reluctant spring.

It brought a warm and generous summer after,
Days of content, and holidays of mirth,
Yet something pricked me through my clearest laughter
As an unbudded seed will prick the earth.

I wait for a miracle, as long ago
I waited for love—and still I do not know.

* Of Moline, Ia. Mrs. Seiffert has won several prizes and published two collections of verse.

II

Autumn! Unbudded seed, how shall you grow
In the used and weary meadow that is my breast,
How shall you stir, and struggle, and brightly show
Green shoots of verdant life where all the rest

Is withered brown? Yet in my waking hours
That new seed pricks me with the pain of spring,
And through the night I dream of cloud-white flowers,
O whiter than the frost these months shall bring.

My autumn spirit is sterile as a star,
My body is cold and doubtful as autumn earth,
They are strangers, they have drawn apart so far—
How shall they meet and give new beauty birth?

Autumn! Unbudded seed, how shall you bear
Your shining blossoms in the frosty air?

III

Do you bring messages, O dear late-comer?
If you had words for me, why did you wait?
My bright and friendly comrade of the summer,
You are still welcome, but you come too late.

What is there left in me? Do you understand
My emptiness? Your eyes are still and deep,
There is a healing magic in your hand,
You have wept all the tears you had to weep.

You love me as you love a twisted tree,
A tortured mountain or a shivering bird,
You love what once was bright and clear in me,
You speak, and far away I am deeply stirred.

What are your messages? O do you bring
The golden promise of another spring?

IV

You came as quietly as He used to come
Who said to Peter: "I am a fisher of men!"
I try to thank you but my lips are dumb
With gratitude. You have brought my soul again

From empty space where it starved with loneliness
Back to the bitter fields of autumn earth
By the strange magic of your gentleness,
Your understanding, and your healing mirth.

You do not warm my spirit with brave words,
You do not blind my eyes to anything,
It is autumn with bright leaves and hungry birds
Not the illusion of a second spring.

Yet lovely miracle! The seed shall grow
And lift cloud-blossoms white against the snow!

LEONORA SPEYER *

APRIL ON THE BATTLEFIELDS

April now walks the fields again,
Trailing her tearful leaves
And holding all her frightened buds against her heart:
Wrapt in her clouds and mists,
She walks,
Groping her way among the graves of men.

The green of earth is differently green,
A dreadful knowledge trembles in the grass,
And little wide-eyed flowers die too soon:
There is a stillness here—
After a terror of all raving sounds—
And birds sit close for comfort upon the boughs
Of broken trees.

April, thou grief!
What of thy sun and glad, high wind,
Thy valiant hills and woods and eager brooks,
Thy thousand-petalled hopes?
The sky forbids thee sorrow, April!

* Mrs. Edgar Speyer, originally an American, has settled in New York after many years abroad. Has published *A Canopic Jar.* Her poem "Two on a Hill" won a prize of the Poetry Society of America. Known also as a violinist.

And yet—
I see thee walking listlessly
Across those scars that once were joyous sod,
Those graves,
Those stepping-stones from life to life.

Death is an interruption between two heart-beats,
That I know—
Yet know not how I know—
But April mourns,
Trailing her tender green,
The passion of her green,
Across the passion of those fearful fields.

Yes, all the fields!
No barrier here,
No challenge in the night,
No stranger-land;
She passes with her perfect countersign,
Her green;
She wanders in her mournful garden,
Dropping her buds like tears,
Spreading her lovely grief upon the graves of men.

TWO ON A HILL

He: Spring is a wedding-feast at our feet;
Beloved one,
Drink . . . eat . . . !

She: I am so dazed with buds and wings,
So dizzy with high trees,
And the sky brimming its cloudy cup
As we climbed up;
I am so filled with all good things,
Have drunk so deep of these . . .

And now this height,
This pouring forth
Of the horizon's bowl
From east to west and south to north;
This whole, this whole
Of width and light!

I cannot see.
My eyes are closed . . .
And you beneath the lids;
Look, lover's eyes, for me.

He: Green runs the fields,
Leaping from hedge to hedge;
Green clasps the hills and dreams within the wood,
Green wrapt in dew;

She, with eyes closed:
As you hold me and as I dream in you.

He: Green shudders into life,
Everywhere is the pang of green.

She: I know that pang;
Oh tell the field,
Tell every leaf and blade,
To yield!

He: I see a stream that breaks its winter word,
Takes a new vow
And lifts a wilder cry.

She: I know that cry;
Deep in the night I heard
It murmuring.
So bid it sing!

He: I see far, little squares,
Snug roofs,
Red, gray;

She, opening her eyes and looking down:
Under the roofs is love . . .
Alway.

He: But our strong roof the swinging sky,
Under our roof, wide-spread
The earth's eternal blossoming,
Our bed.

She sings on the hill:
The green and the blue,
Our pillow, our cover;
And close to me, you,
My lover.

The gold of the sun
To nestle upon;
About us, below us,
Above us,
April to love us.

They climb higher:

He: The hill is reeling with its own bold height;
But you and I
Like playful gods,
Will coax it up the sky.

She: Speak not so loud,
How soft the hill against my breast,
How still;
In some white cradle-cloud
We two will rock the frightened little hill
To rest.

They reach the top of the hill. She runs ahead and leaps onto an over-jutting rock. He stands below her, holding out his arms.

She sings:

I am a leaf on the edge of noon,
Lifting still higher:
I am the tip of the crescent moon,
Pointing my silver fire:
I am a bird on the bough of dawn,
I am a dream where no dreams are,
I am a falling, falling star . . .

He, catching her as she falls toward him:
I am desire!

. . . . .

The sun slips down the sky.

He: Shall we climb on?
Beyond the hill I see
A road that dips,
Untrodden of storm or star;
And shall we journey there?

She: Must we climb on . . . so far . . . ?
Dear lips
That have so weakened me,
Oh weight of love that I must bear . . .

The ferns are sweet to lie upon;
Must we climb on?

. . . . .

He: On! Yes!
And on!
Alone . . . alone . . .

. . . . .

She: I think that we are dead,
And that we float
Across a heaven all our own,
Remote,
Even from God;
Oh blessed loneliness . . .

. . . . .

They stand looking down into the valley.

She: The world is such a tiny garden
In which to plant our vast content,
The seeds of such full hours.

He: You are all fruits, all flowers,
The bough, the vine;
You are the sowing and the ripening,
The harvesting divine . . .

She: Gather me, harvester mine!

. . . . .

He: How empty is the valley,
Its green how vain;
I hear the meadows crying out,
The tree-tops droop, the birds are dumb,
All April fades:
So must I bring you to the earth again!
Heart of mine, come.

She: Yet am I sad to go,
To leave the hill
Our hill;
God has sung here, I know.
We stand upon His morning melody,
His rocky trill;

He: We are His song, beloved,
You and I.

She: Lift me, strong arms, once more,
High up, against the sky,
That I may kiss its blue;
And kiss me . . . you!

TWO WOMEN MEET

They do not care about each other, these two,
They never did;
But they were girls together, years ago.

—Years! Years!
How many, my dear!—

They look at each other with the furtive appraising
eye
Of women noticing the changes,
Pretending not to . . .

And suddenly they cling, sobbing a little;
They kiss.

But not each other!

The one is holding to her heart a girl's mad dream,
Forgotten,
And the dream's end,
Forgotten, too.

And the other reaches wistful lips toward a far feast,
And seems to taste the crumbs that fell from that
shining table,
Where,
Careless, singing,
She hardly touched the food.

ROBERT E. SPILLER *

THE ROAD

There's more of the heart of man in the road
Than even the wanderer knows,
For the wanderer travels it light of heart
And cares not whither it goes.

And the road is like the wanderer too,
For it twists and turns with a will,
It hides itself in the valley shade,
Or climbs to the highest hill.

But ages of men have made the road,
And ages of men know best
For there's never a road but has an end,
And the end of a road is rest.

* A graduate of Pennsylvania, teaching at Swarthmore College.

CLARE STEWART *

BY THE BEACH SLEEPING

The waters bubble, bubble, bubble,
Under the moonlight of Hood's Canal.
They bubble, bubble, bubble,
over the bright gravel of my dreams.

They sweep around wooded promontories
bubbling.
They sweep into still-rapt lagoons
thru narrow inlets,
bubbling.

They have bubbled ten thousand years.
They shall bubble ten thousand years,
along Hood's Canal.

I listen and listen
'till the bubble runs thru me.
It rises in a shining flood
and pours over my bough bed on the sand.
It washes away my brain,
I am part of this bubbling sea.

* Mr. Stewart lives in Seattle.

My blood is dissolved into millions of gallons of water.
My bones are clam shell.
My heart is pulsing jelly-fish, borne along,
and my voice is a part of the multitudinous chuckle
of the bright bubbling streams.

I shall bubble, bubble, bubble,
ten thousand years,
oscillating with the tides,
along the clam beaches of Hood's Canal.

SARA TEASDALE

THE DARK CUP

I

MAY

A delicate fabric of bird-song
  Floats in the air,
The smell of wet wild earth
  Is everywhere.

Red small leaves of the maple
  Are clenched like a hand,
Like girls at their first communion
  The pear trees stand.

Oh I must pass nothing by
  Without loving it much,
The rain drop try with my lips,
  The grass with my touch;

For how can I be sure
  I shall see again
The world on the first of May
  Shining after the rain?

* Mrs. Ernst Filsinger. Originally of St. Louis, now in New York. Author of several widely known original volumes and anthologies. Winner of many poetic honors, including the $200 prize of *Contemporary Verse* for the group here published.

II

"THE DREAMS OF MY HEART"

The dreams of my heart and my mind pass,
  Nothing stays with me long,
But I have had from a child
  The deep solace of song;
If that should ever leave me,
  Let me find death, and stay
With things whose tunes are played out and forgotten,
  Like the rain of yesterday.

III

BELLS

At six o'clock of an autumn dusk
  With the sky in the west a rusty red,
The bells of the mission down in the valley
  Cry out that the day is dead.

The first star shines as sharp as steel—
  Why am I suddenly so cold?
Three bells, each with a separate sound,
  Clang in the valley, wearily tolled.

Bells in Venice, bells at sea,
  Bells in the valley, heavy and slow—
There is no place over the crowded world
  Where I can forget that the days go.

IV

IN THE END

All that could never be said,
  All that could never be done,
Wait for us at last
  Somewhere back of the sun.

All the heart broke to forego
  Shall be ours without pain,
We shall take them as lightly as girls
  Pluck flowers after rain.

And when we have found them at last,
  Perhaps, after all,
The skies will not open for us,
  Nor heaven be there at our call.

V

"A LITTLE WHILE"

A little while when I am gone
  My life will live in music after me,
As spun foam lifted and borne on
  After the wave is lost in the full sea.

Awhile these nights and days will burn
  In song, with the brief frailty of foam,
Living in light before they turn
  Back to the nothingness that is their home.

MARY DIXON THAYER*

A PRAYER

When I am dying—I'll not see
Stiff angels bending over me
With fluted wings,
Nor long to hear
The song, they say, an angel sings
For those who fear.

Nor shall I even ask Your hand—
Lord of the things none understand—
As I depart . . .
But may my heart
Be filled with love—not bitterness—
And dying, give me strength to bless
Each moment lived; may I recall
Life's rapturous, swift days, and all
That I have treasured on the way
Through Time—this be the Prayer I pray:

I give Thee thanks, oh great Unknown,
For Life as my life ends. Alone
I render back Thy gift. Behold!
It is a story that is told;
And, amid all the lives that pass
Like but a tremor in the grass.

* A Philadelphian, whose *Poems of Youth* has just been published.

Yet, Lord, I loved it—through its pain,
Bewilderment, and sin. Oh deign
Then, as I leave that which is mine,
And journey on to what is Thine,
That, in this instant, I may see
Again all that is dear to me. . . .

Wide fields, with daisies nodding late,
And hills that greenly undulate,
And skies so young, they blush to fall
Into pale morning's arms—hear all
The strange, sweet, eager, endless sounds
Of summer nights—the secret rounds
Of tiny lives. And may I feel
Sharpened, blue shadows dip, and steal
Across soft silence; on my face
The touch of flowers, and the lace
Of sunlight strained through moving leaves,
And the long kiss of love that grieves.

Oh! I have loved the little songs
Of little birds, and all the throngs
Of little bodies hurrying
Between the Winter and the Spring!

No hour too long wherein I lay
Beneath the tasselled, ripened hay,
And felt the sunshine crushing me
With sweetness, and the ecstasy
Of the red earth, whose heart-throbs beat
Vigor into fresh fields of wheat.

A Prayer

No hour too long wherein to dream
By some forgotten mountain stream,
And watch the ways of butterflies,
Or of a leaf, before it dies.

So as I reach the end of Here—
The brink of Timelessness—not fear,
Nor hope, nor sadness may I know—
But only Love. Then smile, and go.

JUDITH TRACTMAN *

WISH

I wish I were a bug,
A little fat cool bug
Blinking at the sun.
I would lie all day
Upon a lily-leaf,
Fold my hands
Across my stomach
And dream
And sleep
And dream.

But no,
I must listen to your pitter-patter
And grin ingratiatingly at you
While you discuss food and clothing
And mop your heavy forehead
And complain about the weather
And the world.

I wish I could tell you
That I wish I were a bug,
A little fat cool bug on a lily-leaf
Blinking at the sun.

* Of New York.

You would start and stare
And mumble something trite
About the effect of the heat.

Yet I wish I were a little bug
On a cool lily-leaf
Or hidden in a leaf-cradle
Swinging on the top of the tree.

EDNA VALENTINE TRAPNELL*

THE FIDDLER

Donal o' Dreams has no bed for his sleeping,
No gold in his keeping, no glove for his hand;
But the birds understand his wild music's leaping
And the children follow his fiddle's command.
He is sib to the winds and the wandering streams
And the stars are the kinsfolk of Donal o' Dreams.

When day goes over the edge of the dark
The grandsires hark to his songs of old,
And on dreams of gold do the lads embark
While the lassies beckon him in from the cold
But he's heeding no hearth where the firelight gleams
For the Voices are calling to Donal o' Dreams.

Playing o' nights by the fairy rings
The brown fiddle swings a dancing song;
Nor right nor wrong in the music sings—
(O, the light feet whirling the leaves along!)
Soulless as moon's light and soft as her beams
Sounds the fairy music of Donal o' Dreams.

Gold cannot stay him nor maidens' sigh—
Stars fleck the skies or the fiddle's croon
Softens the noon on his way that lies

* Mrs. Trapnell is at present in New York.

To the East of the Sun and the West of the Moon—
Always in search of that Land he is roaming
And he follows its Gleam from the dawn to the
gloaming

DANIEL M. TROY *

AS THE BAND GOES BY

Jes' listen, folks, to dat slew-foot ban';
Dat's de music, man, dat's de music, man!
Jes' listen to dat oompah, oompah ho'n!
Oh! Ain't dat gran'? Oh! Ain't dat gran'?
Jes' heah dem flutes ez dey go uhlong—
Not uh mockin' bird kin beat dat song—
An' heah dem cymbals, Bim! Bim! Bim!
An' de bass-drum waitin' to come out strong.
BOOM! dere it goes! BOOM! Dere it goes!
An' cla'inets—Why, goodness knows—
Dey's jes' ez fine! Dey's jes' ez fine!
An' see dem nigguhs in p'radin' clo'es!
An' look uh-yonduh at de head—
Dat big buck niggah, all dressed in red,
Wid dat sumpt'ous cane wid de gilded ball
Uh-wavin' de way de music's led.
Ain't got no job, ain't got no money,
Dere ain't no woman to call me "Honey"—
Ah got to die; but Ah can't cry—
Dat slidin' trombone sho is funny.

* A graduate of Pennsylvania, practising law in Montgomery, Ala.

Heah! White folks, hol' me on de groun'
Ah'm ca'ied away wid lubly soun'
Mah soul is riz! Mah soul is riz!
Dat minstrel ban' done hit de town!

HAROLD VINAL *

MY OWN

Oh, I must answer to a name
  And live upon a certain street,
And stairs within a dingy house
  Must bear the burden of my feet.

Still, when the night is dim and sweet,
  In dreams I roam the silent hills;
Where aisles of shadow, vague with light
  Are petaled soft with daffodils.

I foot it through the silver dark,
  I shout aloud to field and tree;
And all this gypsy heart of me—
  Is longing, longing to be free.

Oh, I must answer to a name
  And live upon a certain street;
But who shall take my dreams from me—
  Or keep my life from being sweet!

* Born in Maine, now teaching music in Boston. Editor of *Voices* and winner of a *Contemporary Verse* first prize for 1922.

SEA LONGING

You who are inland born know not the pain
Of one who longs for grey dunes and the seas
And sound of ebbing tide and windy rain
And sea-mews crying down immensities.
You who are inland born, know not the urge
Of rapt tides beating passionate and wild;
Nor have you thrilled with wonder at the surge
Of drifting water, wayward as a child.
Impetuous I seek the eager sea,
Imperious for joy and wind-blown spray;
You, who are city beaten every day,
What do you know of mirth and ecstasy?
No thirsty wind has journeyed from the South—
And laid a cool, wet finger on your mouth!

WILLARD WATTLES *

WHEN I FIRST FELT . . .

When I first felt within me stir
My manhood's subtle springs,
There came a sudden beauty
To long accustomed things,
I found the revelation
Of all my wonderings.

I knew the touch of bodies,
Why women's eyes are bright;
In storied old romances
There was a new delight;
New understandings sought me out
And told me in the night.

The hills drew nearer to me,
The earth exposed her breast;
To all her wooded privacies
I was a bidden guest;
The murmur of a mountain brook
Was like a friend confessed.

* Originally of Kansas, now teaching at the Connecticut Agricultural College. Author of *Lanterns in Gethsemane* and winner of a *Contemporary Verse* first prize for 1922.

Then men inclined unto me
Yet never spoke their thought;
It was enough to know that they
The deeper meaning caught,
The roughest salutation was
Significantly fraught.

There was in little children
Perpetual wonderment,
Their grave and quaint decorum
With some old passion blent,
And then a smile that lighted all
The face's firmament.

New wonder broke upon me,
I saw with fresher eyes,
I grasped at once how deep is hell,
How high is Paradise . . .
I knew the meaning of the Word
And the dead Christ's sacrifice.

I HAVE HAD GREAT PITY

Pan-Athenaic

I have had great pity of forgotten lovers
Whom the world remembers only as a name,
Sad and ineffectual singers of the twilight
Who have gone the wind's way whence they came.

Here we halt a moment in the pleasant places
(One there was who loved me, long ago,
Loved me, loved me, loved me, loved me—)
Tell me what the wind is—surely lovers know.

Lay aside the lyre, Alexis, I am weary,
Thy fingers pale have touched too many strings;
Warmer through the plane-trees falls the sun at
noon-day;
Better the sea's kiss, bitter though it stings.

Late last night I heard two mingled voices
Hushed in sudden wonder—still her body clings!
Shadow me no shadows, I am weary, weary;
Thy fingers pale have touched too many strings.

. . . . .

What is this that whitens all the quiet water,
Like a floating lily, redder than the rose,
Stately as a cedar when the wind arises,
Where the lonely ripple softly over-flows?

What this that reaches out its hands to touch me,
All my sunny body sudden grown so cool . . .
After all the fever here to meet with mercy
Tangled in the cresses of a lilied pool!

. . . . .

The lamp I lifted to my stormy window
Sullen the dark has strangled while I prayed,
And the dear lips of him I loved at midnight
Answer no more the lips upon them laid.

Straighten the feet that know no more of leaping,
Kiss down the eyes that have no need of light;
And above him crumble the faithless wick to ashes
Of my dull lamp that failed him in the night.

. . . . .

Let fall the doom, disdainful of their thunder
Whatever gods may guard the walls of Troy:

Andromache may lift her hands for intercession:
They shall not hearken who evenly destroy.

Purple the wounds that mar his shining belly
Here where the bronze has spent its bitter thrust;
Let fall the doom, there's not a god shall throw me
Till I have leveled Ilium to dust.

. . . . .

Athene of the Olive Tree, slowly the procession
Leaves the shining agora and mounts the awful hill,
All the golden maidens bearing before them
The snowy flaxen offering, reverent and still.

Firm of foot beside them walk the youths in beauty
Naked in the wisdom of the sun-drenched air:
Athene of the Olives, altogether lovely,
Mounts the slow procession up thy holy stair!

ACCEPTANCE

I cannot think nor reason,
I only know he came
With hands and feet of healing
And wild heart all aflame.

With eyes that dimmed and softened
At all the things he saw,
And in his pillared singing
I read the marching Law.

I only know he loves me,
Enfolds and understands—
And oh, his heart that holds me,
And oh, his certain hands!

WINIFRED WELLES *

DRIFTWOOD

Life gave me these—
The beauty that can only branch in trees
Who are content, knowing the roots' securities—
The strength to stand up straight and bear the wings
Of a brave ship on her adventurings—
The bitterness of being broken, being tossed
And driven on the waters and the winds and lost
In desolation, mist and stinging foam,
And being beaten back at last to home.

Now Love has kindled me—
Strange that my beauty of a dear, green tree
Should vanish into smoke and memory,
Strange that the strength, magnificently mine,
Should fall before the flame without a sign—
But oh most strange that bitterness should be
Drawn up in color after color out of me!

THE POPPY-ROOM

Wide-open-windowed in the morning time
It could belong to anyone,
A sewing-room where winds might scatter threads,

* Mrs. H. H. Shearer. Of Norwich, Conn., but now a resident of New York. Author of *The Hesitant Heart* and editor of *The Measure.*

A play-room for the sun,
An easy height for sweetnesses to climb—
Those tendrilled fragrances, like ivies twining,
Of cooling loaves and browning loam
And blossoms moist with June—
But later in the afternoon
It was my mother's.

Then, with a bobbing, like bright heads,
The sun stole 'round the house and hushed its shining,
The wind put up its needles and went home,
And fragrance swung no further than the eaves
But held its breath there in the leaves,
As if they knew this place was now no other's,
As if, with me, each heard her say,
"Run off now, dear, and play,
I'm going to the Poppy-Room."

Whether those paper poppies on the wall
Were real to her or just a dreamy bloom,
Whether she bowed to them or made them bow
For her, I never knew at all—
I only knew that she came down the stairs
At evening, as a star comes down the sky,
Her eyes as calm as prayers,
Her steps a lullaby.

Remembering those rows of sleepy plumes
And how my mother sought them all alone,
I am not wistful now
When, for a moment, people seek release.
I watch their thoughts draw down across their minds

With the finality of blinds;
I hear their silence like a turning key,
And know that they have closed to me
Some holy place they call their own.
And so I am not lonely—
They have not really left me, they are only
Going to their poppy-rooms.
They will return in peace.

JEALOUSY

What? Did my spotted lily startle you?
Sorry—I never thought to warn. It's true
You come upon it rather suddenly
Out of that vacant, dingy hall. You see
I've lived with it and tended it so long,
I never seem to realize how strong
And harsh its colors are. In this back room
They fairly snarl and crackle through the gloom.
Well, yes, a little sickish I admit.
I'll open up the window for a bit
And let a gust of lilacs in—There, now,
You watch him in the field while I tell how
I came to find it first. . . .
I guess you know
How much he likes to be alone, to go
Forever wand'ring off across the hill,
Or mooning 'round the ruins of the mill,
Or somewhere, anywhere it seems to be,
So long as he can get away from me.

But once—he was just opening the door—
I felt I couldn't bear it any more!
I snatched his hat and cried, "What right have you
Always to leave me so? I'm going too!"
And went.
There was a blurring kind of rain,
That soaked the world up in a slow, grey stain;
And mist like phlegm—You couldn't hear a sound
On any side, except the one the ground
Made, ogreishly sucking at our shoes.
I knew that low road was the one he'd choose
To plague me! So I led, and set a pace
Across the marsh that fairly made him race—
Although for all of road or roof or tree,
We might as well have stumbled undersea.
No wonder I stopped short and screamed out loud,
When that thing jabbed its hot fangs through the cloud
Around our feet!
"It's just a flower," he said,
"A happy, lonely lily, warm and red."

I couldn't stand the way he kept so mild,
And spoke as if I were a fool or child.
"Pick it!" I cried, "If red can rise in mud,
And warmth in mist, there's hope for flesh and blood!"
He stared beyond the fog. . . .
"Oh let it stay,
A wild thing fades if you take it away."
I knew then what my man was thinking of,

His other wife—that Gypsy—his first love—
And growing sentimental with his past,
As if in spite of death, she were his last.
So I stooped down and clutched it in my hand,
Gasping as if it were a burning brand,
And tore it up, leaves, blossom, roots and all!
He never said a word, but straight and tall
Stalked slowly off, and like an oily screen,
The grey, unrolling film slid in between.
I waited 'til his footsteps in the mire
Smeared over too.
I hid my flower of fire
Beneath my coat, but even then it shone
Enough to light the long way home alone.
He said that it would fade. I made it thrive.
Close to the window pane it seemed alive
As her own face that used to hover there,
With eyes as black as dungeons under hair
Tawny and wild and bound with red. For hours
She'd watch that curve of road between the flowers.
She'd watch, but nothing came until the day
The hearse drove up to carry her away.
I liked my lily for awhile, but now
It's bloated, glow'ring, terrible—Somehow
It lived so easily, it grew too well.
I often fear it and the bloody spell
It seems to cast. Even the walls and floors
Are mottled with its shadow. Lock the doors
And blind the windows but I still can see
The flicker of its poison burn towards me.

And then that odor—almost as if slime
Could ooze along the air. Many a time
Those sluggish sweetnesses uncoil and creep
Upstairs to slink into my very sleep. . . .
I guess you're right—fancies like these are bad,
And apt to make folks think you're kind of mad.
But they're familiar ones to me, you know—
I plucked that lily twenty years ago.

SILENCE

She was a quiet little body
  In a quaint silk shawl,
Who sat and sewed and listened,
  But hardly spoke at all.

She let her copper kettle
  And her bright as copper fire,
Wag like tongues and hum like voices
  In a cozy little choir.

She was quieter with others
  Than they could be alone,
But the flashing of her fingers
  Was a wit all its own.

And while we talked her needle
  Like a swift dragonfly,
Was sewing seeds of summer
  Into squares as blue as sky.

I have taken tea from many,
And talk from many more,
But a blue bag of lavender
I never had before
Or since from any woman
When I left her at her door.

Now that her fire, her kettle,
And herself are still,
Hearths seem merely hissing,
Spouts only shrill.

So I never stop from talking,
So I always keep astir—
I would be afraid of silence
That was not a gift from her
In shiny bits like ribbons,
Sweet, like lavender.

DOUGLAS C. WENDELL*

THE SONG OF THE SEA

Ho for the strength and the scope of the sea,
  Ho for the heave of his roll;
Ho for his vast blue symmetry,
  Ho for his surgent soul!

Out where the white intermingles with green,
  Out where the mist sweeps clear;
Out where the dawn breaks cold and clean,
  Out where the stars are near!

Here in the mud and the landlocked cold,
  Here in the huddled hut,
I curse this desolate landsman's hold
  And curse this frozen rut!

My mind is out where the bow cuts sheer
  With a plunge in the challenging wave;
Where a man's heart sings and laughs at fear,
  And the universe is his slave.

I can see from the crowsnest's swaying height
  A league of sea swells run
And race and foam and break in the light
  Toward the east's red, radiant sun.

* A graduate of Haverford College, living at Wayne, Pa.

And I can turn to the midnight's gloom,
  Where silence seems to flow,
And there's only the curling hiss of foam
  And the phosphorescent glow;

And slowly the ground swell heaves and falls,
  And slowly the stars move by,
And clear through the darkness a sea gull calls
  To his mate in the still gray sky.

JOHN HALL WHEELOCK

IMPLACABLE BEAUTY

On the wide waste the web of twilight trembling,
Hangs low with stars and night,
The dying day, in the worn west dissembling,
Crowns his defeat with light.

Here by the sands and dunes my soul sinks crying,
By beauty stabbed to death—
"O in the dusk of the world let me too, dying,
Mingle with these my breath!"

There is no answer. In the cold heavens shining,
Star trembles unto star:
The virgin moon in the clear west declining
Hangs, like a scimitar.

* A graduate of Harvard, now with Charles Scribner's Sons. Author of five volumes of lyrics.

MARY BRENT WHITESIDE *

THE ETERNAL QUEST

I must pass on.
From piercing beauty greater than my soul can bear;
From pain that as a crown of thorns I wear,
I must pass on.

I have known passionate loveliness so long—
Wings and the thrilling ecstasy of song;
Color and shade and majesty of trees;
And snow and clouds and light and fragrances;
Roads I have known where silver birches stand
Like outposts to some far off wonderland;
Calm crystal water under tranquil skies,
Where the pale starlight slowly flares and dies.
Dawn I have known and sunset and the moon;
Gold summer fields beneath the azure noon;
High hills and valleys; heat and rain and cold,—
Too many marvels for the heart to hold.
These I have known, who may not yet express
A single violet's April loveliness.

I have known heights, and all the infinite range
Of high and beatific moods, and strange
Magic of love, that freely lavished all
Its golden wealth, a royal prodigal;

* Of Atlanta, Ga.

Swift joy and lyric sorrow, and the whole
Passionate diapason of the soul;
Sharp, windy griefs that shake the heart an hour,
As storms in the midsummer shake a flower,
And pass again and leave the rain-drenched bloom
With loosened petals, but no less perfume;
Brave hope that drew me to a sunlit place
Of hills that look forever on God's face.
This I have known, who may not dare to write
How very close the deep is to the height!

I have known silence holier than speech,
And aspiration like a star, that I might reach
Only in moods transcendent, when I stood
Outside of evil, beyond conscious good,
And touched the very heart of life, and drew
Close to the Things whose names I never knew,
Lest I should reel at my celestial goal,
Because their utterance would shake the soul.
Ah, dreams all these, too wonderful to be
Other than a supreme reality.
This I have known,—a glimpse beyond the veil
Where speech is not, and human symbols fail.
And yet—through days of vision, nights of troubled
rest,
Goes on the quest—dear God, the eternal quest!

I must pass on.
Till every throbbing passion of the flesh be done;
From pain to beauty, and from sun to sun,
I must pass on.

MARGARET WIDDEMER *

SONG FROM A MASQUE: JOHN OF THE WANDERINGS

John of the wanderings, this even is thy night;
Guard us all who seek thy shrine from elf and pixy-light,
Turn the Bel-Fires burning bright to holy altar-flame,
Let the elfin rings we cross be harmless at thy name,
Let no Old Ones wake tonight from shadows where they lie . . .
Saint, spread thy mantle till the spells pass by!

The brown feet of fairy-folk, an elf-green gown,
Flashed far to call us as we left the pious town,
Winds call and swallows cry—O elfins, let us go,
We must reach the holy shrine before the light is low . . .
Saints with nodding aureoles keep watch along the sky—
Saint, spread thy mantle till the spells pass by!

Winds from the pagan summer whisper down the way—
Shall we dare the elfin woodland—shall we go to pray?

* Now living at Larchmont, N. Y. Author of novels and volumes of verse, one of which divided the Columbia Prize.

Some shall find the altar's foot and some the enchanted stream,
Some shall bring a blessing back and some shall bring a dream,
Sweetly sing the elfin-folk—heaven is far and high—
Saint, spread thy mantle till the spells pass by!

John of the loving heart, thou knowest we are young,
Guide us still if they should wander, eager heart and tongue,
Some of us shall fare afar from holy prayer and fold,
Finding thee in dream alone until our hearts are old—
John, who till the Judgment Day shall not seek the sky,
Saint, spread thy mantle till the spells pass by!

CHARLES WILCOX *

A GARDEN IN WINTER

The ragged stalks like phantoms rise
  Above the snow-enshrouded bed,
The wind makes mournful melodies
  Among the tree-tops overhead.

The fountain Pan his lyric stream
  No longer pipes to pools below,
The marble nymphs and satyrs dream
  Of summers vanished long ago.

* Of Kingston, R. I.

MARGUERITE WILKINSON *

FOR THE CHILD THAT NEVER WAS

O little hands that never were
With apple petalled beauty made,
You might have held me close for joy
Whence I have strayed:

O little feet that never were
Fashioned for tripping melody,
Your gladness might have kept me brave
On Calvary:

O little lips that would have drawn
White love to feed you from my breast,
You might have been my love itself
Made manifest.

O Child of mine, you never were—
No throes have thrilled me to rejoice—
You would have been my conquering soul,
My singing voice!

* Mrs. James G. Wilkinson. Long a resident of California, but now in Scarborough, N. Y. Author of two original volumes and of *The New Poetry*, a combination of criticism and selections.

OSCAR WILLIAMS *

O LITTLE WAIF

O little waif from fairyland,
My heart can never be your home,
For you belong where free winds kiss
The ocean's white lips pursed in foam.

O little waif from fairyland,
I have no comforting for you,
Your hope is in some magic night
Where silver moonbeams kiss the dew.

O little, crying, homeless waif,
If you could only understand,
My heart can never be the home
You could not find in fairyland!

* A New Yorker, the author of two volumes, and editor of *Rhythmus*. Associated also with *The Broom* and *The Forum*.

CAROLYN CROSBY WILSON *

ON A CHILLY DAY IN SPRING

But yesterday a close and mellow sun
  Made me the intimate of wakening spring.
I flickered with new lilac leaves, was one
  With crocus spears and all earth's blossoming.

It was myself that burst each shelly bud,
  And took fresh courage in the dark to prod
Green fingers through the warm and genial mud.
  I was the new grass flashing on the sod.

Today a sharp wind cuts me from such friends,
  And though new marvels may transpire, I pass,
Interested and amazed, as one who bends
  To watch rare specimens opening under glass.

* Mrs. Henry C. Link, a graduate of Vassar College, now living in Brooklyn. Author of a volume entitled *Fir Trees and Fireflies.*

JOHN FRENCH WILSON *

WINTER AFTERNOON

Sometimes in winter, when new-fallen snow
Is white upon her stones, and Christmas near,
And homebound shoppers hurry to and fro,
And early lamps burn suddenly and clear,
Blue in the frosty dusk, an atmosphere
Of warm well-being quivers in her street;
And one who listens, having faith, may hear
The rhythmic throbbing of her great heart-beats.
Thus for a moment will she strangely soften,
Fair as a woman waiting for her lover
Seems to a lover whom she waits not for;
But for a moment only; and not often:—
And lo, again, in high waves crashing over,
The interminable tides of traffic roar.

MOONLIGHT

Sometimes a keen wind blowing from the north
Rolls off the smoke; and when the day is done
A clean full moon comes boldly striding forth
To walk upon the roofs of Babylon.
Then is a transformation wrought, which none

* A student at Haverford and Harvard, now practising law in Cleveland. Winner of a *Contemporary Verse* first prize for 1921.

Will dare believe, who has not seen this thing:
On pools of silver light the shadows run
And all her tumult sinks to whispering.
Then beauty dwells with her, and wonder calls,
Luring and fugitive from her abysses;
Her bright lamps pale to fire-flies agleam:
And the hard contour of her granite walls
Looms like the edge of mighty precipices
No man has looked upon but in a dream.

RAIN

The sun is cruel over Babylon;
It spills cheap gold upon her grime and gray,
And throws a beam of tawdry splendor on
The things her lovers most would hide away.
Then is her clatter hideously gay,
But interwoven with a shrill unrest,
Sad as a harlot's on a holiday,
Drunken, and shrieking out an obscene jest.
But when a mist streams in, and gray clouds hover,
Babylon dreams in the rain; and dreaming is
Dowered with something of the majesty
That dwells in deep green water rushing over
The vibrant rim of a sheer precipice
To an awaiting and uneager sea.

IN THE NIGHT

I wakened to the pitter-pat
Of little feet across the floor;
I heard her little fingers at
The handle of my bed-room door.

In the Night

The moon was full; I saw its light
Break over her in golden bars.
Her baby eyes were big with fright
And glowing like October stars.

She cuddled very close to me,
Requiring to be comforted,
And made confession drowsily,
"I dreamed a mouse was in my bed."

But I shall hear those words of hers
Above the din of graver things,
While presidents and premiers
Debate upon the doom of kings.

NORINE WINTROWE*

THE DISTURBER

Why did you come along the little street
When I was standing, dreaming, in my door?
Why did you turn and look at me, and smile?
Now I can never stand there any more,

For when I do, the old dreams will not come—
My quiet dreams of stars and spaces wide—
I always see you pass, and when you smile
I have to close my door, and come inside.

THE LAUGH

The devil forged a chain, and laughed at Love,
Who stood, blindfolded, bound, against the wall—
The devil wrapped Love's cloak about his form
And ran upon the hill to give Love's call.

I looked and thought I saw Love standing there,
So I went up to him. He bound me fast,
Then laughed at me, but suddenly he fled,
For Love had broken through his bonds at last.

* Now at Lansing, Mich.

Love stands here on the hilltop at my side.
He broke his own chains, and would break mine now,
But upward from the valley comes a laugh—
The chain the devil fashioned was a vow!

FROM THE STAIR

You closed your door, but after you had knelt
The door clicked—opened just a little way,
I saw the light lay fingers on your hair
And touch your lips that curved about a prayer,
I saw your throat against the shadows' gray.

You were not bowed in fear before your God,
You looked up through the dark as though you knew
He heard. I wonder if it was the prayer
Or just the sight of you before Him there
That brought His good-night blessing down to you.

CLEMENT WOOD *

I PASS A LIGHTED WINDOW

I pass a lighted window
  And a closed door—
And I am not troubled
  Any more.

Though the road is murky,
  I am not afraid,
For a shadow passes
  On the lighted shade.

Once I knew the sesame
  To the closed door;
Now I shall not enter
  Any more;

Now will people, passing
  By the lit place,
See our shadows marry
  In a gray embrace.

* Originally a lawyer in Alabama, now engaged in literary work in New York. Author of three volumes of verse and two novels.

Strange, a passing shadow
  Has a long spell!
What can matter, knowing
  She does well?

How could life annoy me
  Any more?
Life: a lighted window
  And a closed door.